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PROBABLE ESSAYS

For Inter., B. A. and B. Com. Examinees
and for Candidates of Competitive
Examinations

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BY
K. BANERJEE, M. A., B. L.

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the living creatures of a vast area close their eyes for good. The smiling town bedecked with parks and towers is reduced to ashes. The priceless relics of art representing hoary civilization of a country kept in museums are smashed and powdered to dust.

We shudder to think of the loss of life and property a war involves. Parents lose their dear sons, wives their loving husbands and boys their affectionate parents. The world-war of 1914-18 cost approximately £80,000,000,000, according Dr. Butler of America. This sum would have been sufficient to buy up the whole of France and Belgium. More than 10,000,000 were killed, 20,000,000 were wounded and 10,000,000 embraced death in influenza which visited Europe in the wake of the last Great War.

Let us turn to the state of trade and commerce. The smiling land of plenty is turned into a barren desert. Fields remain fallow, crops fail, famine and epidemic visit the land to give the finishing touch to the grim picture of horror. War strangles trade, and chokes up commerce. Government exhausts its treasury in manufacturing and purchasing war materials and in maintaining the forces. The result is that the Government has to float loans.

War is the enemy to culture. It paralyses the arts of peace. The philosopher loses his balance of mind, the poets bid good-bye to Fancy, the musician plays, not on an instrument but with a bomb and the painter keeps aside his colour box and brushes. The educational institutions are closed. The pen takes to the sword. The onward march of civilization is arrested, nay retarded. The hand of the clock of progress is thus pushed back.

The loss and sufferings of the country invaded and the country conquered know no bounds. The famous architect-

tural buildings are destroyed, libraries burnt down, museums demolished and seats of religion are desecrated. The harrowing accounts received from the war-fields of China and Europe particularly Russia beat all past records.

Thus from whatever point of view we may look at it, war is an evil. The beast in man, inspite of education and culture, dies hard. War is the manifestation of this animal propensity in man. However much we hate it, it is hard to remove this blot on civilization from the face of the earth. The sooner we realise that war is a catastrophe and not a glory to idolize, a disease to diagnose and find out a remedy and not an achievement to adore, the better for humanity.

Nothing is perhaps an unmixed evil. Even war which destroys all that is good in man and all that is good done by man has its constructive side. Out of the ashes of war emerges a new order, a better adjustment of world affairs. Old ideas are buried, old theories are demolished. Old dynasties, old forms of Government and old states change. All these may take place at the end of war but ideas filter, things take shape with the progress of war.

'Necessity is the mother of invention', the creative side of war is therefore most manifest in the manufacture of new and novel weapons of life as well as of death. Not only in armaments but also in the manufacture of civil requisites scientists rack their brains and find out substitutes.

Each country vies with the other in its bid to become self-sufficient. An industrial country tries to find out substitutes of raw materials from its own soil while a country backward in industries attempts to make its own goods. The result is that in a period of war the greatest industrial activity is witnessed. This leaves behind permanent marks of industrial progress in peace time. War then is a great stimulus to scientific and industrial development.

RABINDRANATH TAGORE

Rabindranath is a wonder of the world. To tell his story within the narrow compass of a few pages is to narrate the story of the *Mahabharata* in one breath—so vast, varied and versatile are the attainments, and achievements of this myriad minded mentor of men. Howsoever one looks at him, he stands as a Colossus, a giant among men, with a genius—vast, deep, limitless as the ocean.

Once in a thousand years comes such a man through whom an entire nation expresses itself. Such was Valmiki in ancient India, such was Homer in Greece, Virgil in Rome, Dante in Italy, Goethe in Germany and Tolstoy in Russia. And such was Rabindranath in India. "He is", in the words of Sir S. Radhakissen, "the greatest figure in modern Indian Renaissance". India expressed her dreams and aspirations, her ancient wisdom, and modern questionings, her contemplative calmness, and her divine dynamism through him—in all forms of art—in a way at once sublime and beautiful.

Born on May 7, 1861 at Jorasanko, Calcutta in one of the most cultured families of Bengal, he was brought up in an atmosphere of comfort and refinement in which music, poetry and high discourse were the very air he breathed. For schooling of the orthodox kind,—and indeed for everything orthodox—he had from the very beginning a wholesome dislike. Oriental Seminary, Calcutta Normal school could not detain him long. His mind was at once too eager and too dreamy, and too independent and too sensitive to fall readily into the conventional rut.

His father Maharshi Devendranath, a man of wealth, culture and sanctity was a great traveller, and he took the boy with him in his wanderings. Thus he made his

acquaintance which deepened and soon ripened into love with lush fields, and the drifting sails, and the simple peasant-folk of rural Bengal. He began to write almost as soon as he could walk, and he "lisp'd in numbers for the numbers came", his first poem being composed when he was only twelve. In 1871 he was sent to England to stay and study English with his third brother Satyendranath and he was in Brighton school for some time, whence he was admitted into University College of London.

He married in 1883, and in 1888 was born Rathindra-nath. Everything seemed to move on well. But a series of misfortunes visited him soon. His wife died in 1902, his second daughter in 1904 and his great father in 1905 and his youngest son in 1907. The sufferings caused by these successive bereavements are reflected in his poetry, *Smasan* and *Kheya*.

Even early in his life he was easily in the forefront of all cultural life of Bengal—religious, literary, political and social. He guided *Adi Brahmo Samaj* for some time, edited journals like *Bharati*, *Bangadarshana*, and was one of the founders of the *Bangiya Sahitya Parishad*. He was for a time at the helm of his zemindary, with his headquarters at Sheleida, and toured different parts of Bengal which was so fruitful in his later life.

In 1912 when he left for Europe for the third time, he met Yeats, Stopford Brooke, Nevison who recognized the profound beauty of his poems. "Some passages in the *Gitanjali*", says Maeterlink, "are among the loftiest, most profound and most divinely human ever written." He returned to India in 1913 after visiting America, and the Nobel prize on literature was awarded to him. Between 1920 and 1939 he undertook no less than seven extensive

tours in the East and in the West including one to Russia which deeply influenced him. From his prolific pen flowed down ceaselessly poems, essays, dramas and stories. In the words of Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, "His tongue chimed like a bell, played like a flute, rang like a drum and thundered like a trumpet." Human moods, human longings, love, sorrow, joy, ecstasy, heart-ache in all its variations never found more exquisite expression than in his poems. There is hardly any department of Bengali literature that he has not touched and adorned, elevated and filled with inspiration and lighted up by the lustre of his genius.

Among his works '*Balaka*', the greatest of his books, '*Chitrangada*' one of the summits of his work, *Urbasi*—the greatest lyric in Bengali, *The King of the Dark Chamber*, *The Post Office*, *Gora*, *Home and the World*, *Naibedya*, *The Crescent Moon*, *The Cycle of Spring*, *The Sacrifice*, *The Gardener*, besides immortal *Gitanjali* are only a few taken at random. His Hibbert lecture "The Religion of Man" is a monument. In his art the million-fold physiognomy of the masses which no one looked at before, first found a shape, and through their pained faces he called attention to the social and economic tyranny to which they were subject. So did he give voice to the suffering soul of womanhood of our country often wronged by man, and then despised. Distinctions forged by man which cramp the human soul have never been condemned with fiercer ardour than they were by him.

This prince of poets was a great controversialist. He was not the man to receive a shock on his cherished ideas lying down; he was never a creeping creeper at the mercy of the winds; he was a mighty oak. On ideals of Hinduism he fought with Rishi Bankim, on ideas of non-co-operation

and spinning wheel he battled with the Mahatma. He bombed and torpedoed the charges of "obscurity" and "immorality" levelled against him by no less a person than the celebrated Bengali play-wright D. L. Roy.

He was not merely the Fancy's child warbling wild notes, but a practical visionary. He conceived the great aspiration of founding in India a home of culture where all the conflicting ideals of the world would meet and embrace in ties of love and friendship. The concrete shape of this dream of his is the *Viswabharati* which, in its rudimentary stage, was founded in 1901. It is the *Nalanda* of the modern age. His ideas and ideals of education have taken here a practical shape. His vision was for a balanced, enlightened and harmonious life, supplied with the amenities it needed, and nourished by the fine arts. The *Viswabharati* is the concrete manifestation of that dream.

This man of poetry, peace and dreams, on occasions, when some affront was offered to the national honour of his helpless people, was inflamed by a noble wrath and his muse, usually soft and mellifluous in her notes assumed a vibrant tone which thrilled the country. In the days of Partition of Bengal this prince of poets was a moving soul, conducting Provincial conferences, composing national songs, and teaching the people to spurn politics of mendicancy. In the dark days of the Punjab horrors, he renounced his knighthood which was conferred on him in 1914, for "badges of honour make our shame glaring", and he wished to stand "shorn of all special distinctions" by the side of his oppressed countrymen.

In the quiet retreat of his ancestral home at Jorasanko, Calcutta, where he had seen the first light of day the poet of India's destiny breathed his last on August 7, 1941 at

the age of 81 and thus became extinct a Heaven's light that was the guide of mankind and ever "true to the kindred points of Heaven and Home."

Rabindranath is beyond appreciation, beyond praise, beyond comparison, and no language however eloquent and elegant can describe his vast, varied and versatile contribution to Bengali literature, and the general thought-currents of the world. Let us bow to him, this prince of poets, the passionate patriot, prophet, playwright, painter, philosopher, and practical visionary. Let us adore this composer who freed music from the thralldom of ancient moulds, this inspired interpreter of India's eternal message, and this radiant genius which gives us inspiration,—solace in our sorrow, comfort in our weakness, hope in our despair, and light in our darkness.

JOURNALISM

With the spread and popularity of newspapers a new means of livelihood has come into existence. It is journalism. It is the occupation of publishing, writing in, or conducting a paper or a journal. Newspaper hawkers, the *chaprasis* and peons of a newspaper office or the compositors engaged in a newspaper printing press are not, however, journalists. Properly speaking journalists are those who earn their bread with their contributions to the press. A sleeping editor whose practical contribution to the paper is nothing is, however, a great journalist. His name, as editor, shines on the newspaper and he it is who takes the legal responsibility of the views expressed in the paper. The work of a sub-editor may be one of scissors-and-

paste, and one may cut the t's and dot the i's, or one may simply look at the display side of the paper, and yet they are all good journalists.

In these days of democracy, and party government journalism is an important occupation. But there are cases of fair or perverse journalism. Fair journalism publishes news without any motive except regard for truth, and service to man. Honest journalism is deaf to the cries of the interested propaganda, refuses to beat the drums of persons who have no real position in life, save that given by the purse. Pure journalism creates healthy public opinion, educates people, caters knowledge to all, the young and the old,—the mass. It fights the people's battle, without caring for favours and frowns of any outside agency, however mighty it may be. Perverse journalism, on the other hand, excites party feelings, fans sparks of discontentment, sows seeds of discord and suspicion. Nothing is more disgraceful to a journalist when he, casting to the winds all considerations of decency, decorum and propriety, indulges in pure abuses.

There are journals which are pledged to the views of a particular sect or society or a political leader or a party. These papers look at news with the coloured glasses of their own view-points. They arrange it, lengthen it, shorten it where necessary, even omit it, when occasion so demands. These papers are like so many advocates, each presenting its case from its own angle of vision, and converting the people to its views, views which often come in conflict with others. In a country where the people are educated, and they know how to value a newspaper-report these may be tolerated. But in a country where people have sacred regard for anything printed, there is real danger.

With the help of journalists, who are well-versed in mass psychology any man with a long purse and good position may control public opinion from behind the screen. These papers sing and dance to the tune of their masters, and the innocent people swallow them with little knowledge as to its remote object. These papers retail lies, quote scriptures like the devil, fan the flames of passion and misguide people in the name of creating healthy public opinion. If a band of journalists conspires, it can pass on a braying ass as a roaring lion, or an indigo-coloured jackal as the king of the beasts. But truth comes out, sooner or later, and the mask falls off. The success of the authors of the conspiracy is therefore only temporary.

Journalism is a learned profession. It requires a good general education with special knowledge of history, geography, politics and economics. It demands a facile pen, a quick grasp of facts, a balanced judgment and a clear comprehension of the thought-currents of the world. With all these a journalist in a party organ requires something more. It is the indefinable art of beating the master's drum cautiously and carefully, in the garb of truth, avoiding detection of even the critical eye.

The path of a journalist is not strewn with roses. In a country where he is to work under thousand and one press-laws he wields his pen cautiously, restrains his personal feelings, nay, often sacrifices the voice of his conscience. It is he who, at dead of night, keeps awake his wit and intellect, weighs words, scans news and performs his arduous task, with the telephone receiver in his ear. A moment's mistake may bring upon him the slander of the public, may mean an invitation from government to pass a few years' solitary life in jail. The task of a

journalist in a field of war is not an easy one. At any moment his life may be cut short. And if he gives distorted news, his life is equally risky. He may be shot on a false charge of espionage. It is for his services that the outside world knows the march of events in a war zone. In a period of war the thorny path of a journalist of a dependent country becomes more difficult due to strict censorship of news and views.

True, newspapers are things of the moment, and they reflect passing life. But out of these is made the history of the country. The press is a public organ and through it, the voice of the people and the country must ring. Let those who are responsible for the conduct of the affairs of the state hear not the muffled tone, but the real voice of the people and let the people know what their real intention is behind a particular policy of the state.

There are countries where the labour involved, and responsibility taken are rewarded in pay, prospects and recognition. But in countries like our motherland, journalism is ill-paying. The result is that it does not often attract men of light, culture, and education. Disgusted with other walks of life, it is not infrequently the last resort of an educated hungry man.

There are institutions in Europe where journalism is taught. But there is none in India. Recently attempts were made to introduce a course of studies in journalism in the Calcutta University. As to the necessity of such a scheme there cannot be two opinions, and the sooner it is introduced the better for all who have the good of journalism at heart.

Journalists are the keepers of a country's conscience. They are in charge of the sacred duty of defending a country's freedom, political or otherwise. Any encroachment upon people's rights, any unhealthy development in the body of our society—they should fight. They should awaken the sleeping conscience of man by inviting people's attention to the enemies of the country. Journalists are the servants of the mass ; they are the teachers of man.

PRIMARY EDUCATION

Versus

HIGHER EDUCATION

Primary education is concerned with the teaching of reading, writing and arithmetic—the 3 R's, a knowledge of the alphabets, an ability to sign and calculate—the qualifications which go to the making of the dignified position of a literate. It is the rudimentary stage of education ; it is the childhood of education. It relates to education as imparted in Bengal up to class IV of the school course. Higher education refers to college education ; it is post-school education. It tends to specialization and leads to technical and vocational courses. If primary education is the childhood of education, it is its manhood.

Our country, India is steeped in ignorance, only ten per-cent of the people being literate. Illiteracy is a national vice ; it is the parent of poverty, disease and death. Primary education is therefore one of the crying-needs of Bengal, nay India and everybody, irrespective of caste, creed or colour must stand for its expansion. Higher education has also its importance, importance which we must not belittle for the sake of primary education. It is for her higher education that Bengali scholars and teachers are loved, liked and respected throughout the globe. It is for her higher education that Bengal's contribution to world culture occupies an honoured place (even taking no account of Dr. Tagore). Everybody with the good of the country at heart must therefore acknowledge with grateful

thanks the blessings of higher education in Bengal, indeed in India.

Properly understood primary education has no justification to quarrel with higher education. It nurses no grievances which can be redressed by higher education. It has no cause whatsoever to appear as a plaintiff before a court of justice and to file a suit against higher education. Primary education is the foundation stone on which is built the great edifice of the Temple of Learning where Higher education is worshipped. The leg of a body cannot quarrel with its head. If the ground floor of a sky-kissing palace grumbles that it has to bear the burden of upper floors on which however the beauty, grandeur and glory of the building rest and if we pay heed to its murmur and demolish the ground floor the whole palace collapses. And the ground remains bleak and bare and it does not attract the notice of anybody in this world of towery palaces and castles. The position is this that Primary education follows its own course and must be made sound, secure and must be spread throughout Bengal, nay India. It should be made free and compulsory. Those who hold the key to the public purse must unloose its strings and make necessary provision in this behalf. No civilized Government can afford to ignore the imperative educational needs of a country. "Tax the people and then only make it free and compulsory"—has been a slogan current for sometime. In a poor country like India this policy practically amounts to a negation of primary education. Nobody can afford to court smilingly starvation for the sake of primary education.

But there are people, big people they are, who find fault with higher education in Bengal. They labour under an illusion that there is an excess of higher education in

Bengal. They imagine that it has made the Bengalees sentimental, luxurious, weak and effeminate. They argue that it has intensified the problem of unemployment and driven the Bengalees out of trade and fight. They debate that it has fanned discontent in Bengal and is ultimately responsible for political restlessness in the country. The wonder of wonders is this that they also hold higher education responsible for terrorism which has darkened her fair name in certain quarters. They propose therefore that higher education in Bengal should be curbed and curtailed at all costs and money thus mis-spent should be better utilized for primary education of the country. The authorities support such a proposal. They favour financial readjustment between the claims of primary education and secondary education. The total amount spent on education remains same as before. By the curtailment of Govt. grant for higher education a large sum of money will be released which, they suggest, should be appropriated for primary education. In this view of the case, primary education comes to fight higher education. It is here that primary education stands as a rival to higher education and each must struggle for its own existence.

The arguments against higher education in Bengal do not stand a moment's scrutiny. Higher education as imparted in Bengal is itself inadequate and there is enough room for its further development and expansion. Indeed such an expansion is an imperative necessity for the country. To starve higher education in Bengal is to strangle the very cultural life of Bengal and arrest its growth and development and all that is good in Bengal. The objections raised against higher education are only lame excuses to find fault with a good thing. It is purely a case of giving a bad

name to a dog and then hang it. It is for want of proper higher education that these grievances, if any, exist. And the remedy is not its curtailment but its expansion.

To rob Peter and then pay Paul—is the scheme to curtail higher education for the expansion of primary education. Both primary education and higher education are necessary and no scheme to expand one to the detriment of the other can be supported. This plan only raises fruitless controversies in the serene education-world. It is only a device to divert the mind of the people from the real issue, that is, the unwillingness of the authorities to unloose the strings of public purse for the cause of education in Bengal. Men in darkness cry for light. Let there be light. Make primary education free and compulsory. Men in feeble light pray for illumination. Let there be illumination. Expand higher education. Let light and illumination of Bengal lift the veil of darkness in India and those of India flood the world. And let the world bow before India.

SCIENCE AND RELIGION

Science lifts up the veil of Nature and peeps into the mysteries of the Universe. Religion is faith in God, and the practices man observes, the thoughts and ideas he nurses in his heart from such a faith. The scope of science and the scope of religion though different, yet in the realm of the thought-world one reacts upon the other, and traverses the region of the other.

Before the advent of science Religion was the monarch of all he surveyed, and there was none to dispute his rights.

In the heart of man Religion was enthroned. But owing to the lack of scientific knowledge king Religion had a large following, that is to say, many superstitious practices clustered round him. But with the birth of Darwin, Newton, etc. the throne of the mighty king Religion shook. With the spread of the ideas of these scientists the death-knell of the king Religion was sounded. But not without murmurs of protest, growls of opposition, not without war, and bloodshed did Religion yield his sacred ground.

The history of the fight between the champions of the Church and the devotees of science is a painful reading. When Darwin traced the origin of man from monkey, the fathers of the Church were furious, for it disproved the Biblical theory of the origin of man from Adam and Eve. So they raised the cry, "Religion in danger." Under the influence of the Church, the state demanded the heads of the scientists who dared to defy the Biblical theories on a charger. In the name of religion a ruthless persecution was carried out, but in vain. Galileo was imprisoned by the Italians for upholding the scientific conception of the movement of heavenly bodies. The German scientist Robert Mayor was thrust into a lunatic asylum for his discovery of the "insane theory" of the Conservation of Energy. Attempts were made to gag the voice of reason, to stifle the voice of conscience but to no purpose. Truth however triumphed. And in its triumph science was vindicated. A section of the Church was even converted to the views of the scientists. Those who had scoffed at science now began to pray in its temple.

With the progress of science, the people bewildered at its dazzling achievements. All that man needs is given by science. With the gifts of science man rolls in luxury. With

the establishment of man's mastery over the forces of nature, and with spread of scientific method of enquiry an impression gained ground that there was no God, no Heaven and no after-life. The champions of religion felt disconcerted. In vain did they argue their case ; in vain did they justify their necessity of religion. But the people are practical. The reverence, born of a deep faith for religion, is gone, and instead, people have been paying lip-deep respect for the Church and religion. From the heart of man religion has been dethroned, and it has been reduced to a matter of form.

But with the intensive study of science its evils were soon revealed and the warm enthusiasm of a section of its votaries cooled down. Science, they now say, turns a man into a sceptic. Science, it has been said, has made man crooked and dishonest, immoral and irreligious. With science all that is best in man has vanished into air. Gone is our simple faith. Gone is our honest belief. Gone is the divine in man.

Science follows the path of reason. Religion pursues the path of faith. Science argues, demonstrates, scans and accepts some but doubts much. Religion thinks within and believes, but doubts little and accepts much. Religion stands on intuition, but science on reason. Intuition always remains veiled. It brings to man some messages from the unknown. Reason only comes in afterwards to see what profit it can make out of the harvest.

There are more things in Heaven and Earth than are dreamt of in our science. Sree Aurobinda observes, "The intellect is not all, a guide within awaits our question." Neither science nor religion by itself can discover the absolute truth. Religion uncontrolled by science may lead

us to superstition. Science "unaided" by religion would make us dogmatic. "Apart from religion" says Whitehead "human life is a flash of occasional enjoyments". In the march of our life we require both.

Properly understood science has never fought true religion, but only mythology, orthodoxy, religious fanaticism. Science has only rationalized religion, systematized it and has brought back the mind of the doubtful within its fold. It has therefore come not to destroy religion, but to fulfil it. It has exploded the myths, superstitious ideas which so long choked the fountains of true religion. It has purified and purged religion of its un-welcome excesses.

The discoveries of science prove how mysterious the mysteries of the universe are, how mighty the Almighty is. Before the mysteries of the universe man, man proud of his intellect and science stands dumb, mute and awe-struck. And he reverently bows down his head. Science mingles here with religion and West, the stronghold of the former, embraces thus East, the nursery of the latter. In his, "Is Science Superstitious?" Bertrand Russel says, "Most men of science in the present day are very willing to claim for science no more than its due and to concede much of the claims of other conservative forces."

BROADCASTING—ITS POSSIBILITIES

From a station songs are sung, stories are told, news are relayed and lectures are given. The sounds float through the air, and strike on the aerials planted on the roof of an individual, holding the license for the same, and

a person enjoys all these, reclining on his arm-chair. Wireless telegraphy and telephony are milestones in the march of man on the onward path of science. The dream of the visionary has been materialized. Broadcasting is the distribution by wireless telephony of news, lectures and music, etc., for reception by all, each provided with a suitable apparatus.

When the Government of India took over the charge of the Broadcasting Co. there was a considerable amount of criticism both in the press and on the platform. It was considered as a waste of tax payers' money and luxury for the few. But the services rendered by the Radio soon turned the eyes of suspicion into those of admiration.

The Radio is an amusement. Tired of the day's work, the busy man reclines on his easy chair, lights up a cigar and listens to the Radio,—the songs and the talks. It relieves his nerves and soothes his heart. It acquaints him with the day's news, the rates of the market and the thought-currents of the world.

It is, however, a mistake to look upon the Radio as an amusement, pure and simple. It has its educative value. It scatters away knowledge. A busy man who can ill afford spare to go through the newspapers can learn the day's main news beforehand in the evening. A merchant can know the latest news regarding the rise and fall of the prices of the commodities. A young lover of sports who dances impatiently at the gates of the football enclosure in vain, and comes home cursing the game, finds immense relief when the Radio broadcasts the game.

The Radio is yet a child, but it is a child full of promise. It has immense educational possibilities. The problem of mass illiteracy can be solved through it. Through it, the

manual workers, the agriculturists can be taught rudimentary knowledge of health and hygiene, history and geography, no matter whether they are in the fields or in the factory. The school and college tuition can be similarly done. The best professors may lecture on topics favourite to them and all the students may listen to it with profit and pleasure. A university in the air may thus be born. The big professors may only survive. But the small ones need not be afraid of it. The machine cannot explain individual difficulties. They will be there to do that.

A truant student would never refuse to listen to interesting and entertaining stories sitting at home, though he might be a problem to his school teacher.

The religious lessons, the commands of the *Bible*, the *Gita* and the *Koran* may be given through this. It does not mean destruction of the temples, churches and the mosques for, the Radio has come not to destroy but to fulfil. It thus can popularise religion.

Through the grace of Broadcasting we heard Mussolini speaking to his Blackshirts, Hitler addressing the "insane" Poles, and Marshall Chiang Kaishek exhorting the Chinese to fight the Japanese. Mr. Winston Churchill confers with President Roosevelt somewhere in the Atlantic, and settles the terms of a joint declaration regarding the second Great World war which Major Atlee broadcasts, and the world listen to them with rapt attention, and Hitler in his quarters at some Russian front frets and fumes.

The man who has no Radio in his house and who has neither the desire nor the patience to stand on the pavement of a public road where a Radio, fitted with a loudspeaker, adorns the front door of a shop, reads the morning newspapers with some relish and gusto. But the man who

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listens to the Radio in the evening finds the papers often stale. Broadcasting has taken away much of the value of the services of the telegraph and the telephone. But one is not the substitute for the other. The Radio is an amusement, a teacher and a friend, philosopher and guide.

If the services of Broadcasting are beneficent in peace, they are equally useful in war. The first thing that an enemy does when he attacks a ship is his attempt to put the wireless set of the vessel out of order. The first thing that a front column of a motorised unit does is that it captures or destroys the Broadcasting station of the town. These measures are taken to prevent anybody of the outside world from coming to the rescue of the attacked ship or the invaded town. The first thing that a victorious army does, when entering into a town, is to control the Radio station with a view to make propaganda.

The Radio creates public opinion. It is a great weapon to make propaganda. It creates political consciousness. The Indian State Broadcasting Company are making every endeavour to make it popular. But nothing is an unmixed blessing. The use of Radio in politics abroad has been disastrous. It has been the tyrant's joy and a monstrous engine of one-sided propaganda. The more people listen in, the more dependent do they become on authority, the less reliant on their own judgment. The people now hang upon the wireless voice. What is happening now under the combined pressure of Radio in the house and photography in print is the collapse of reading.

Broadcasting has made great strides in India, and specially in Bengal. It would, indeed, be a red letter day for the Radio when every school, every hospital, every slum of big towns and all the rural areas in India would be fitted up with Radio sets.

DEMOCRACY VERSUS⁰ DICTATORSHIP

Since the days of Aristotle democracy has been the idol of the political philosophers. Since the French Revolution, Government of the people, for the people and by the people or their representatives has been the ideal form of Government of the nations. Democracy, according to Prof. Laski, is aristocracy by delegation.

Many a poet sung its praise, many a statesman taxed his brain for its safety and security and many a man sacrificed his life for it. It is democracy which has rescued the weeping man from the tyranny of a Czar and a Louis XIV. It is democracy which has fed the hungry millions, clothed the naked multitudes, and nursed the sick and suffering humanity. It has brought a new era in realms, political, social, economic, religious and literary.

But out of the ashes of the last Great War, new and novel ideas raised their head, and a new form of government called dictatorship sprang up. A feeling has gradually gained ground that it is not wise to keep the controlling power of the state in the hands of the fickle mob, the mass of a country.

The Great War had brought so much depression in the mind of many people that they lost all confidence in their own capacity and wanted a strong personality who might take all the responsibilities of their future. He is a man of extraordinary merit, one having a tremendous personality. Dictatorship is one man's rule, yet it is not autocracy. This is a popular government, yet people do not take part in government functions. Stalin in Russia, Hitler in Germany, Franco in Spain and Mussolini in Italy are the most prominent dictators of the age.

This new form of government is a rival to democracy. The ideas of the two schools differ and they differ fundamentally. There are conflicts of interests and clashes of powers. Many hold that the present European War is a fight between democracy and dictatorship. It is a fight between the best brains of many with the brain of primarily a great person, a person before whom all bow, and all pale into insignificance.

Democracy is the ideal form of government, a form which has stood the test of time. Yet it has its critics, indeed very harsh and adverse critics. And the criticisms are not few. It is urged that it is extra-vagant, the elections are costly. It is antagonistic to reverential spirit. It has a false principle of equality. It encourages dull mediocrity. It is fickle, changeful and emotional. It counts more upon quantity than on quality.

Most of these attacks, though looked mighty from a distance but when analysed and examined, have no legs to stand upon. It is true that at times of national emergency all governmental functions are often conveniently entrusted to one man. It facilitates quick action, not only in war, but in economic settlements as well.

Under a dictator the interests of all are safe. The question of majority and minority does not arise. Gone are the sickening party squabbles for ever. The public are blissfully ignorant of all government activities. Everything goes on smoothly, systematically and peacefully. In times of panic people do not turn panicky. In the regime under a dictator, life becomes a machine, individual personalities do not flower and there is little scope for individual self-realisation.

To keep himself in power war is absolutely necessary for a dictator. "All powers corrupt", says Lord Acton "and absolute powers corrupt absolutely". Revolution is the only weapon to displace a dictator from his seat of power.

In a democratic state you are free to criticize government within reasonable limits ; you can capture the reigns of government yourself. But in a state under a dictator you cannot whisper a word against the Government. There an attempt is being made to shape all life in one mould. It is easier for a dictator to commit mistakes than for a democratic government.

Both democracy and dictatorship may degenerate. But it is easier for the latter to develop into an autocracy than for the former into mob-rule. Besides, the aggressive nationalism which the dictators glorify is a challenge to internationalism, and a menace to world peace.

Orthodox democracy has proved itself miserably unequal to the exigencies of a modern government. The problem is to modify the traditional institutions of democracy to suit existing conditions. The inefficiency of democracy first became noticeable in its economic aspect. The dictatorial states have succeeded in tremendously enhancing the economic security of the working classes. The problem for democracies is to manage the economic system in such a way as to ensure for everybody a reasonable amount of security coupled with a reasonable amount of liberty.

Animal militarism may threaten democracy. Indeed, it may be eclipsed here and there, but it is only an eclipse. The eclipse over, it will shine forth in its resplendant glory to help the weeping man in his march for self-realisation. It appears that the pro-dictatorship wave

in Europe is a passing phase and after the present European conflagration, ideas may settle down, and democracy may come out victorious and vindicated. And the ship of every state will sail on smoothly. Some socialistic writers suggest that on the conclusion of the present war capitalistic democracy must give way to socialistic democracy.

IS PREPARATION FOR WAR THE BEST SECURITY FOR PEACE ?

Everybody longs for peace, peace not of the grave, peace not spiritual which looks down upon this mould of sinful clay, but peace political—a sense of security, where there is no danger of aggression from without, no fear of riot within,—a suitable atmosphere for the growth and development of arts and crafts. Peace can only reign when the people are non-violent and tolerant, when they respect the feelings of others and glorify the dignity of patient suffering.

Preparation for war means a fighting spirit, a clanging of swords and means manufacture of gun powder at the cost of poor tax-payer's money. The best security for peace is, therefore, to cultivate the cult of love, preach the gospel of universal brotherhood and encourage complete disarmament. That is the view of a man who does not dive deep into the problem and is content to live and move only on the surface.

In the bosom of every man sleeps a demon, a demon greedy, cruel, and ambitious, a demon whom education,

culture and religion can only lull into sleep, but cannot succeed to kill. War is the manifestation of this sleeping demon in man. When a clash of interests takes place, a conflict of ideas occurs, the sleeping animal leaps up and in its fury peace is disturbed. Education cannot pump out this dormant animal in man and turn him divine. So long man is man, there will always remain the demon of war, the dance of death, the cruel carnage of man.

Saints are few but sinners are many. The world is not replete with Buddhas, Christs, and Gandhis. They live in a fool's paradise who visualize a time when every man will turn into a Lord Gouranga. It is an idle fancy, sweet to hear, but non-existent in the world. As there are lambs so there are tigers. If it is true of the animal world, it is equally true of the human world. A wild Darwinist may be pardoned, if he imagine a time when men, in process of evolution, will be all Buddhas. But let us approach the subject from the standpoint of a realist.

Human nature being what it is, war is there and war will be there. To put a stop to these occasional outbursts of animalism, individual, communal or national, not love but force—force not for always actual application but for a display of might is necessary. Preparation for war is necessary to strike terror into the hearts of the people within the state and the people out-side it. The people within and without, must realize the weight of the military strength of the state and that the state can, at any moment, should the occasion arise, strike and strike hard to punish the law-breakers, to teach the international gangs of robbers, not in a spirit of vindictiveness but to restore peace and harmony. Then and only then can we attain peace, real and lasting peace.

A robber plunders the house of the weak, and the unprotected. A tiger pounces upon a helpless lamb, but not upon a roaring lion. Mussolini attacked Abyssinia, but not France till France was prostrate. Arms and ammunition are necessary not to commit international piracy and robbery, but to maintain our hearth and home and to enjoy peace and to be free from the terror of a greedy Hitler, a wicked Franco, a designing Mussolini and a hungry Tojo.

"It is excellent", says Shakespeare, "to have a giant's strength, but it is tyrannous to use it like a giant." If the forces of land, air and sea be weak, riots may break out, or a strong neighbouring state may invade. If there were no police, or if the police vigilance were slackened a bit, goondaism would prevail, and peace would be no-where. Peace can only be real and lasting when the military is maintained and kept at such a level of efficiency that the disturbers of peace, within and without the state, would think twice before they launch in a campaign of a doubtful gain. If a state desires peace it must be in readiness to fight. This is a paradoxical statement. Any man before attacking another, should his animal passion so desire it, must measure the strength of his opponent with that of his own. If it be in his favour, only then he would choose to disturb king's peace. That being normal human psychology, readiness in war is the best security for peace.

THE CIVILIANS IN WAR TIME

War is an affair of the military—the land, air and naval forces. The soldiers are paid, fed and maintained by the state. They have practically no work in peace. It is their duty to fight in war. The civilians have therefore no concern in a war. They can only offer prayer for victory, honour the fallen heroes and glorify the victors. Such indeed was the impression of a section of the people. But, with the flames of war spreading all over the world now, those people have been disillusioned. With the development of modern scientific war nobody now lives in such a fool's paradise.

When a war breaks out the whole country is stirred to its depth. Nobody in the realm can afford to remain idle ; when Rome is burning nobody should fiddle. Everybody must take part in some sort of activities in furtherance of the purpose of war. He or she who does not do so, is regarded as an enemy of the country. War is a period of national travail, sorrow and suffering. It calls forth all the resources of a country to fight the enemy. The result of the war affects everybody of the land. Rightly or wrongly when a country is plunged in war everybody must do his best for when a house is set on fire, it is no argument for anybody to say that it is the clear duty of the Fire Brigade alone to extinguish fire.

In a war all the resources of the nation, private and public are pooled and all energies are focussed towards only one direction, that is, the victory of the country and the defeat of the enemy. Anything which goes in favour of it, is just and proper and anything which goes against it, is unjust and illegal.

Various are the ways in which the civilians play their part in war-effort. In a free country which joins a war there is compulsory recruitment of the civilians in the army. The able-bodied, within certain age-limits, have to join in some kind of war-service. If a large number of people is required to fight in the war front a larger number of people is necessary to keep them so engaged—ministering to their needs and necessities, manufacturing weapons of war, etc., and keeping alive the strangled trade and commerce. Besides these, the civilians, men and women, organise themselves voluntarily in various defence services such as Home Guards, Civil Pioneer Force, A. R. P. Services and Civic Guards.

But, be it also said, that in a country where the glory of victory or the shame of defeat goes with an alien sovereign power, the people do not feel the same warmth, the same urge to fight the enemy to finish as they do in a free country. Russia has been showing and China has been demonstrating what a people's war can achieve.

In the modern world no state can exist by itself. It depends for its supply of articles either raw materials or finished goods from other lands. War cuts off these supplies and the misery of the people multiplies. A city where electric lights turned night into day is blacked out and the movements of man are curtailed.

It is true that in a war the soldiers are slaughtered like cattle but the sufferings of the civilians know no bounds. The rich have to forego their luxuries—luxuries in the eyes of the poor but being long accustomed, are, to them, articles of necessity. The middle class people sacrifice their comforts—comforts which they consider a mark of gentlemanliness. The mass have to face starvation. But to every one life

becomes a burden due the price of articles going up. Gifts of science enjoyed so long but taken away or curtailed suddenly without warning prove to be our curses. If you have a motor car, you have no petrol and if the machine goes wrong, it can hardly be repaired.

Cheap railway-travels, cheap articles of comfort made the life of a civilian enjoyable but in a period of war the civilians have to forgo them to make room for the needs of the fighters. The soldiers fight in circumstances of great hardship and discomfort. The needs of these soldiers, who pledge their life and limb to the country, must be considered first of all, though a Bernard Shaw may look down upon war and pooh-pooh the profession of a soldier. In order to look to the amenities of life of the soldiers, the needs of the civilians are curtailed and are curtailed sometimes so mercilessly that many consider life unbearable, worse than that of a fighter. People who never in their life went out of doors without a car have to move in public conveyances ; people who are accustomed to daily shaving have to go unshaved and the sick go without medicine.

Many a problem, undreamt of and unheard of, raises its head and the civilians have to face it. It is true Government try to tackle the problems as best as possible but they can only reduce the bitterness of their cup of misery and cannot put a stop to it. Controls in the supply of food, etc. are measures for the good of the people.

The civilians are asked to leave their sweet homes for the location of the military and they are asked to evacuate an area for the purposes of war. Government pay no doubt compensation but cannot solve problems which arise out of these measures. It is also true that the Govt. measures in a free country meet the needs of the people as far as

practicable but in a country like our India these measures are often bitterly criticised, as they fall far short of the needs of the people. Thus the Govt. control of food supply has been bitterly attacked in the press and on the platform. People forming a queue were to remain standing for hours to get a seer of sugar, rice or a quarter seer of kerosine. You cannot get a medicine in its controlled price but you can get lots of the same from black market, if you pay a fancy price. If a few die in fighting and hundreds die in bombing, thousands die in starvation. Above all, the bombing menace hangs over the life and activities of the civilians like the sword of Damocles.

War is a period of abnormal life. How best may one tackle the problems, their bitterness may only be reduced. The civilians therefore can only face them calmly and quietly as an unavoidable evil.

ADVERTISEMENT

Advertisement means the publication of information regarding articles for sale, meant for the intending purchasers. There are, on the one hand, people called the producers, who make goods, manufacture articles and wait anxiously with hungry eyes for the purchasers, and there are, on the other hand, a large class of people, called the consumers, who move hither and thither in search of things which would satisfy their wants. Advertisement establishes contact between these two classes of people. It brings the producer into touch with the consumer with a view to adjust demand and supply. In the remote corner of

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a village a person manufactures an excellent malaria specific, and in another part of the earth malaria-stricken people suffer, and die for want of a good medicine. Advertisement comes in here, and renders service.

Time was, when the merits of an article, passed from lips to lips, and the purchasers flocked to the door of the producer of the said article. But those were the days when the wants of the people were few and far between. With the ever-increasing wants of man, the production of various articles of necessity, comfort and luxury, advertisement has developed scientifically and an art has grown.

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The present world is full of advertisements. If a person opens up a newspaper or a periodical what a variety of advertisements greets his eyes!—pictures in different poses, letters in different sizes, words in alliterative phrases, language in superlative degrees—guarantees and assurances to heal each malady he suffers from, each vying with the other in a contest to arrest his kind attention, and each inviting the reader to bestow a moment's glance. If he opens up a Bengali almanac, he will find all sorts of dealers hawking their goods. If he passes through the thoroughfares of a big city, the posters and placards would arrest his eyes. The men at the crossing of the streets and public places would thrust into his hands handbills which give accounts of wonderful medicines, with genuine and unasked for testimonials, testifying to the efficacy of the medicines. In the railway station, the cinema and theatre hall whatever direction he may cast his eyes, there are advertisements. However miser a man may be, they whet his curiosity, spur him on to purchase, and goad his greed. And in a moment of weakness, he unlooses the strings of his stiff purse.

It requires the nerve of a stoic to resist the temptation of alluring phrases of advertisements, the wonderful things promising a person, the vigour of a Hercules, the beauty of a Hellen, the money of the millionaire, and a heaven on earth ! It is true that in the world of advertisements many things appear in such a gaudy dress that even an intelligent person labours under the illusion that all that glitters is gold. In the beating of drums, shouting of the hawkers, dancing of the placards in variegated coloured lights, a person is apt to lose his balance of judgment, and he fails to distinguish the genuine from the spurious, the real from the bogus.

Advertisement is often so dressed that we mistake it for an impartial statement of facts, and fall a prey to it. There are others who are caught unawares by the glare of it. Newspapers and periodicals are very anxious to give the reader "Free" articles ; there are firms which wish the reader "Happy Christmas" on the Christmas day, and on the *Bijoya* day, they convey "*Bijoya*" greetings.

Various are the means through which advertisement is done. The newspapers and the periodicals, the platform, Radio, exhibition, cinema and aeroplanes are potent agents of advertisement. Special films are produced for the purpose of advertisement. The show cards, calenders, catalogues, boards on tramcars, prizes in various forms, paid agents also serve the same purpose. Cross-word puzzle competition is another way advertisement.

Advertisement is the soul of a business. It promotes trade, develops commerce, quickens sale, creates demand and encourages new and novel creations. In this age of materialism and machine, when thousand and one articles of necessity, comfort and luxury are being produced day in

and day out, advertisement is an indispensable necessity. In this world of competition, and struggle for existence the fittest only survive. No trade can flower, sustain and develop without the help of this weapon. Big firms spend large sums of money for advertisement. Unless a trader's good goods are known throughout the world, his articles, inspite of their quality, are sure to remain unused, with the result that they would die a natural death. In the absence of proper advertisement many a flower is born to blush unseen, unhonoured and unknown.

The proper function of advertisement, as has been pointed out before, is to help the producers to get into touch with the consumers. But there are people who, casting to the winds all sense of decency, decorum and propriety, use this weapon to cheat the simple-minded people. They make a parade of sex-urge to push the sale of their good-for-nothing goods, and cheat the people. Advertisement thus becomes a public cheat number one. But fraud cannot continue for long ; only the genuine lasts and the false falls in the march of life. This is neither a healthy sign of the society, nor does it display good taste. The gutter press may publish anything for money, but journals of repute should refuse to give publicity to anything calculated to undermine the moral of the people. Cheating through advertisement may succeed only once, but on the next time, the cheat is sure to be cheated.

In a sense, advertisement means any sort of propaganda. There are people who are mad for name and fame, and who pass restless days and sleepless nights with a view to be in the lime-light of the public. They have a large following for favours showered, or services rendered to their devotees. And the faithful followers blow their bugles, through news-

papers and pamphlets; the unique qualities of their master's head and heart. And an ordinary person appears in the lurid light of the public. This is a sort of advertisement. And when the master slips, preachers are sent for, the services of the poets are requisitioned, pamphleteers are hired, and they combine in a symphony of praise. Verily the world is a stage, and men are led by the posters !

NATIONAL PLANNING FOR INDIA

Economic planning is the conscious regulation of the economic life of a country with a view to secure maximum social advantage. It is a system of economic organisation in which all individuals and separate plants, enterprises and industries are treated as co-ordinated units of a single whole for the purpose of utilising all available resources to achieve the maximum satisfaction of the needs of a people within a given interval of time. It is the planning for a better life for the mass. It is planning for a state of society where the people will look happy and cheerful. It is not planning for the accumulation of more wealth in the hands of the rich, or those who are enterprising. There are various methods of planning. The Soviet Russia plans in one way, while the democratic countries plan it in another way, and the Nazis plan it again in a different way. Everybody wants a good house to live in, some articles of furniture, some clothing, some leisure for himself, and means to improve his mind. This problem cannot be solved by the existing methods of free competition in the production of goods and services.

The most striking thing about our India is that her soil is rich, but her people are poor. Nationalist India has been complaining for a long time about the economic ruin brought about by exploitation and drainage of the country's wealth under British rule, about "Rolls Royce administration in a bullock cart country". In the anguish of her heart she cries out, "Unhappy India, land of ancient renown, chosen home of enterprise, industry and commerce in the orient! Is this all that remains of thy past greatness and glory? Thy marchants and shippers once directed and controlled the trade of the East and braved the perils of the deep and visited the most distant shores? Where are their modern successors? Gone, gone for ever?" She overcomes her this mood of pessimism and consoles herself. "No, there is a passing eclipse, though so total, so disastrous over which we could exercise no control, but assuredly it can never be permanent." A correct diagnosis of the root causes which have given rise to the problems like poverty, illiteracy, mal-nutrition, unemployment etc. that beset our country reveal that they are largely due to the upsetting of the balance among three primary elements of society—man, occupation, and land, *i. e.* organisation, function and environment. When these three elements of society break their harmonious relationship, there opens up the gap between town and country, agriculture and industry, land and labour, work and wealth, health and humanity.

Planning consists in supplying, rationalising and reconstructing the system of distributing the aggregate of wealth produced in a country every year. The temptation to sacrifice "man" to the "machine" should be resisted, and industry should be socialised. The consumer should be the pivot of any planned production.

With the advent of the Congress Government, a new chapter was opened in the history of human welfare in the country. In 1938 at the instance of Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose, a National Planning Committee was formed and this has been functioning, not however always vigorously, under the able guidance of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru.

The object of the said Committee is to show the right way of handling our problem of national re-construction, when power comes to the hands of the people. The Committee wants to set up an ideal which will unite all sections in India irrespective of caste, creed and country or province—an ideal to which every Indian can offer unstinted homage.

It is no easy task to provide a reasonable standard of civilised life to the vast population of India to provide 400 million people with adequate food, sufficient clothing and proper housing and other comforts. Mahatma's way of living however noble, cannot satisfy the large mass of ordinary mortals. Very few people are at heart champions of his gospel of spinning wheel and Bullock cart.

The Committee finds that national income per head of our population is Rs. 65/-, and for those in villages Rs 35/- per annum while the average income in England is 30 times greater. An average villager lacks in a good house, has no furniture; he dresses himself in rags, has no facilities for education, has constantly to battle against the wolf at the door, and against disease. The Committee has appointed 29 sub-committees to find out how to increase the industrial output.

Factories are run now not so much by human labour as by power-machinery. The power is derived from coal or petrol, or by harnessing the energies of rivers or waterfalls.

Eminent scientists like Dr. M. N. Saha complain, "We have not been developing the huge amount of power-resources in our country, and utilising them for production as required for a civilized existence." "If we can harness our rivers properly" assures Dr. Saha, we can put as much work done for each individual as can be done by ten slaves working constantly." Our first duty is the development of power, and next the industrial work. Though we have abundant raw materials, yet from the pin and needle up to motor car, every bit of machinery has to be imported from foreign countries. "If India is to be properly industrialized", says Dr. Saha, "there is room for 20 more Tata Iron and Steel works." Circumstanced and situated as we are, we should emphasise the task of planning for our defence as well, and its allied problems to ensure safety and protection.

If our country is to take her rightful place in the comity of nations, if we are to renew the sacred springs of our civilization, if we have to shape a hopeful future of our country, then the only way to do so is to get rid of our medieval superstition and tantalizing prejudices, and stand on a common platform of national re-construction in the way suggested.

INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT IN MODERN INDIA

The proud Europeans moving in their Rolls-royce cars sneer at our country as a land where civilization is still at the bullock-cart stage. We will not retort that when our forefathers were not only plunged in the sublime thoughts of the *Upanishada* but also were engaged in

solving the problems of Algebra then their forefathers were perhaps chattering and dangling from the branches of trees with tails downwards and ask them, straightway, as to who is responsible for the bullock-cart stage of civilization prevailing in some parts of India. The story of our industrial development is a very sad story to tell and a young Indian may be pardoned, if he is moved in a matter like this. Under the benign influence of an alien government whose sole concern was in crippling the once flourishing industries of the land and in blocking the ways of possible regeneration no marked improvement could take place. What little improvement there has been, has been due to the popular will, popular will expressed in the teeth of government opposition. Born among enemies, having none to bless them save the chained poor people they fought against alien vested interests and government policy and somehow led a precarious existence, drawing the juice of life from national movements. Over them hang dark clouds, around them lay deep forests, in front of them was a thorny path, in their right, lying in ambush, were rich armed robbers, in their left were false friends and mock admirers but behind them was the chained but sincere voice of the people.

Of the manufacturing industries cotton received the earliest attention and in 1838 saw the first loom bringing out cotton textile which was followed by jute yarn mill in 1851. Step by step, railway in 1854, copper melting plant in 1857, pottery in 1858, paper mills in 1874 and cement in 1879 made their appearance. Glass came in 1892 and match in 1894-95.

Lord Curzon's announcement of the Partition of Bengal was replied by a political agitation which urged the people to boycott British goods and to get their substitutes from

our own manufacturers. This *Swadeshi* movement brought before the public eye vast possibilities of Indian industries. Industrial units dealing with textile, hosiery, match, sugar, toilet, soap, leather, tanning, pottery, glass, enamel, stationery, bank, insurance etc. came like a welcome shower in the midst to the people sweating in the scorching sun. "Buy Swadeshi" movement thus encouraged a desire to purchase country-made goods and even if they were of inferior in quality. This had the desired result throughout India and during 1906 to 1910 as many as 66 cotton mills came into existence. The largest Iron and Steel Co. were organized in 1908 which produced pig iron in 1911 and steel in 1912.

The Great War of 1914—18 released mighty forces which pushed forward the cause of Indian industries. It threw a flood of light on the helpless position of India in the matter of industrial products. Unaided by government a country-wide attempt was made to intensify our industries. With the conclusion of war and with the introduction of administrative reforms protection, that is to say,—discriminatory tariff on imports was introduced. The Indian Fiscal Commission, constituted in March 1921, laid down certain conditions on the fulfilment of which protection was granted. The Indian Tariff Board came into existence in 1923. Though the nationalists in India were not satisfied with it, but it was responsible for some progress. Then came the great surging national tide of Non-Co-operation movement. In the back-ground of this movement was the idea of economic self-sufficiency and non-co-operation with foreign manufacturers and traders. In the list of imports, foreign textile then occupied the topmost honour. At the beginning of the movement cotton manufactured of the

value of Rs. 89 crores came as imports but in a single year it came down to Rs. 45 crores only. The next milestone in the march of Indian industrial victory was the Civil Disobedience Movement. Mahatma Gandhi launched that movement primarily to wrest from Government the right to manufacture salt. It also dealt a death-blow at the foreign textile imports from the effect of which they never recovered. By the grace of God some of the industries were established by this time.

The present war has opened up a fresh chapter in the history of industrial development of India. British is seriously trying to keep her own workshops free to equip her own soldiers except for the theatres of war at the Middle and the Far East. It is her desire to get supplies for these areas from India. Boys named after Bevin, the labour member of the British Cabinet have been taken from India to England at government expense to work in modern factories and learn the new methods of production. Large factories in India have been entrusted with Government contracts and every facility is being offered. Measures like these inspire confidence, breed faith and dispel clouds of doubt. But the other side of the shield is there. The industries which depend upon Europe for the supply of materials have been suffering for the severe curtailment of imports. The importation of the tools, machinery and war metals has been stopped. But the greatest obstacle to the development of our industries is the out-look of the Britisher. What they yield, they yield at great pressure and yield unwillingly. They will not allow ourselves to build our own ships, air-craft, motor cars, armaments, and big industries. The Grady Commission from America have deplored the industrial equipment of India. If the present

titanic struggle continues for sometime to come American experts and improved machineries will be seen on Indian soil. Our raw materials are proverbially rich in quality, quantity and variety. Indian's iron deposits are superior in quality to U. S. A's with as much as $\frac{3}{4}$ of that total reserve of that country. Yet India produces only one per cent of the total steel production of the world. The full implications of the "Lend, Lease policy" which is going to be employed in India are yet to be considered. "The whole idea of Lend & Lease" says Dr. Grady, "is a form of credit and barter by which the U. S. A. give something immediately and then would get it paid in commodities after the war." There are economists who consider the measure, so far as its application in India is concerned, as a leap into darkness. They urge that we should not mortgage our future production indefinitely in the hope of immediate gain. Let us hope and pray that this war will liberate us from all shackles, political and economic and we may be given full freedom to develop our industries in the way best suited to us.

THE BRATACHARI MOVEMENT

Born in the fertile soil of Bengal, the Bratachari movement is now an all-India movement. Nay, it has invaded even the shores of foreign countries. There was a Bratachari Society in London under the patronage of Sir Francis Younghusband. In the world Congress of Faiths Bratachari movement had the honour of being discussed and was highly spoken of. Thanks, thanks to the late Mr. G. S. Dutt, I. C. S., the father of the movement who not only

revived the dying national dances of Bengal, but gave it a unique philosophy.

Many people are under the wrong impression that it is a movement for the practice of certain dances. There are others who labour under the illusion that it is a physical education movement. It is again a mistake to look upon it as a rival movement to scouting, guilding, or a child's concern. As the movement is being backed by high government officials, there is yet another class who view it with suspicion and distrust. The Bratachari movement is a simultaneously physical, moral and spiritual discipline. It is simultaneous purification of the body, mind and spirit. It seeks to remove the unhealthy divisions of life into water-tight compartments. It seeks to destroy the present divorce between religion and science, daily-life, work and joy. It is all-inclusive and all comprehensive.

Dance is merely the outer body of the Bratachari. It is its "*bratas*" or vows which constitute its inner soul. Bratachari dance is not a thing for display or amusement. It is a discipline for harmonising body, mind and spirit, for generating joy, for unifying the individuals into cosmic whole and for energising them.

The basal factors which give the Bratachari its simultaneously personal, national and international characters are its five "*bratas*" or vows of knowledge, labour, truth, unity and joy. The Bratacharis worship the truth, the truth alone and nothing but the truth. They help the distressed, nurse the sick, and fight for the fellows. They are like the good Samaritan, always ready to succour the needy. They consider no work mean, no praise high, no blame disgraceful. They obey their parents, respect their superiors, love the country and are loyal.

The roots of the movement spring from factors which suit every age, clime, race and nationality. It makes an equal appeal to a child and to an octogenarian, to a Hindu and a Muslim and a Christian, to an Indian or to a European. It furnishes every one with a complete philosophy of life and race of conduct. It stands for the furtherance of world fellowship. It aims as well at the preservation and promotion of the distinctive culture of each race and nation. It is simple, practical and joyous system of personal *yoga*, national *yoga* and international *yoga*,—so said its founder the late Mr. G. S. Dutt.

“Whatever may be your country, your sex, your race or religion, whether you be a philosopher, a statesman, or a soldier you need Bratachari training to make you whole and complete,” exhorted the late Mr. Dutt. In the words of poet Tagore, “It generates joy of the spirit, capacity for work, strength and vigour of character and personality and enthusiasm for social service. It reawakens the inner vitality of your life in every sphere—physical, mental and spiritual.”

The wars and conflicts with which the world is being torn into fragments to-day is the outer manifestation of a war within the heart. The Bratachari is an antidote to this. It is the unifying discipline of the rhythmic training of mind and body both. The Bratachari creates an ideal citizen, a cosmic man, a world man.

Not only youth but humanity in general is torn between the two rival ideas of nationalism and cosmopolitanism. These conflicts and discords have been caused by an excessive reliance on the external factors of life, and on external methods. There is need for an inward approach and for the setting in motion of factors which lie at the

root of life. The secret of the unity of humanity and of fellowship among nations must be sought in something deeper than mere acquisition of skills or game competitions or in the adoption of uniform dress, conventions, or formulas, or in mere avowals of international fellowship. It must be sought in an inner rhythmic harmony between the physical and spiritual life, and this inner attainment is the aim of the Bratachari system of discipline and training for individuals as well as groups.

THE STUDENT MOVEMENT

Time was when the students revered their teachers as a devotee worships his God, and the teachers also looked upon their students just like their own children. But the modern outlook is different. The teacher now teaches for his livelihood, and the student now reads to earn his bread. The materialistic outlook has robbed much of the reverence due to the teachers. This does not mean that the relation between the two is like the relation of a trader and a buyer. But far from it. Nevertheless the interests of the students and the educational authorities often clash and the students rally their forces, and combine themselves to fight against any encroachment of the authorities on their just and legitimate rights. For all practical purposes, the first students' organization in Bengal was started in 1927. Frankly speaking, it did not grow out of a natural desire of the students for self-expression. A number of students found themselves up against their college authorities and formed an organization in Bengal called, All Bengal Students' Association to safeguard the interests of the students. The

Association conducts strikes to bring the educational authorities of different schools and colleges to their senses. The official organ of the Association, the *Chhatra*, devotes a section, to the strikes and quarrels conducted by the Association in different educational institutions in Bengal. But it would be wrong to say that the activities of the Association are confined to these only.

The Association stands for the physical, mental and moral development and progress of the student community. That being so, its general programme and policy do not, and should not militate against any political interests in the country. In this age of conflicts, it is after all implied and taken for granted that every movement carries within itself the germs of conflict with other forces. In the case of the student movement, however, there is hardly any possibility of conflict with any other section of society. There is no reason to suppose that the student will find themselves in opposition to educational authorities. If, however, the members of any institution do not look to the interests of the students, it is not very difficult to bring them, with the help of the Association, to a better sense of their duty by drawing public notice to it. On an analysis of the differences between the students and the teachers, it is often found that they do not spring from any lack of interest on the part of the teachers. In nine out of ten cases of such disputes outside influence is responsible for them. Indeed there cannot be any reason why the educational authorities should object to and oppose the activities of the students calculated to further welfare, and to make them more fit.

Student's life is a period of preparation for all the problems that face the individual and community, for the

calls, pleasant or unpleasant that are made upon man in society. The future politician equips himself in his student-life for all the exigencies that may and will crop up and perplex him in his political career. The religious reformer gets himself prepared in his student-life in all those matters which have a bearing on his future work of reform. As a general rule this study, this preparation suffers, if the student is expected to take an active part in the heat and dust of practical, day-to-day politics or of practical work of reform. In case of emergency and abnormal times however the general rule may and is bound to be modified. It is enough for him, if he can devote himself to a dispassionate study of his subjects in all their bearings.

There were occasions when the students were used as pawns in the political games of our elders. Those who do not desire any change in the present system of government are eloquent that the students should not meddle in politics. Those who are aggrieved with the present system of government want the students to belong to their party, and act according to their bidding and serve their interests. Full of idealism, imbued with a desire to serve the country naturally we are apt to be carried off our feet by the political slogans, never caring to reflect on our own future. The students' organization, on occasions allowed itself to be associated with a strife, which has nothing to do with their rights, and grievances.

It is time that the students should take an intelligent interest in politics as in sociology and other subjects. Indeed, a Rip Van Winkle only can afford to ignore it. But that interest should, on no account, be inspired and blindly guided by a thoughtless acceptance of what our elders would have us accept. It is certainly one of the

great duties of the students to engage themselves in political thinking and to prepare themselves for the formation of unbiased opinion in politics. It is for the students to go in for a corporate intellectual existence unaided,—for aid here often means hindrance. Let us, the students, feel our separate existence, and independence. We must be on our guard to avoid the pitfalls which once proved disastrous to the healthy growth of the student movement. The organization should, on no account, be subservient to any party which has no reference to the welfare, whether physical, mental, or moral of the students.

No students' organization can function properly, if it labours under the impression that its ideals are in any way antagonistic or hostile to the teaching authorities. The association should not acquiesce in any attempt of the authorities to command them to any extra-academic policy or action, whether political or social, if that goes, against the self-respect, and our best interests.

The organization must function as a body deriving its strength from the educational institutions, and must be in close touch with them. It will keep a direct touch with the university which must, if it is conscious of its just functions and duties, give its blessings to it. If the organization can justify its existence by demonstrating its ability to understand student's problems, if it can honestly and earnestly devote to them that amount of responsible thinking and emotional drive which is indispensably necessary to bring about regeneration of the youth, the university is bound not simply to give it official recognition, but even to seek its advice in matters of educational policy. The course of education and regeneration of youth is one which cannot be

crowned with success by one-sided activity either of the university or of the students.

The students' movement is a happy sign of the time. The educational authorities should not look at a students' organization with eyes of suspicion and distrust. It is not there to hinder their peaceful activities, but it is there to help them in their administration ; it is there to check the arbitrary exercise of their powers, to control the caprices of the individuals in high position.

The country is in need of youngmen who should not simply supply leadership, but sustain it, who must know both how to command and how to obey, who must have the courage not to bow down before arbitrary and tyrannical authorities. The production of such a student should be the objective of the university, and the movement of the students to combine themselves to make such an endeavour is laudable and must be supported by all.

ART AND MORALITY

Before entering into a discussion on the relation of art with morality, let us first state what we understand by art and what by morality. Art is the expression of life in forms of truth and beauty. It is the reflection of some truth and beauty which are in the world, but which remain hidden unless some sensitive soul brings our attention to it. To Aristotle, it is imitation. To Kant, it is an object of disinterested satisfaction. To Bernard Shaw, it is all propaganda. These descriptions do not clear up our conception of art. Art expresses the creative instinct in

man with a view to give us æsthetic satisfaction in various forms such as literature, music, painting, sculpture, architecture etc.

Morality consists in obeying certain rules of human conduct for the growth, development and betterment of human society. These rules of human conduct have been made by men no doubt, but there is an idea that behind them lies the deeper judgment of God. This religious element supplies the greatest incentive to man to respect moral considerations. But man often confuses morality with religion. These rules of human conduct are not immutable ; they are different in different countries ; they change with the change of environment. Even among the people professing the same religion, moral considerations differ. What is regarded as immoral by a Bengali Hindu may be looked upon as highly moral by a Madrasi Hindu. This is due to the difference in social customs which have nothing to do with God or Heaven.

But there are certain moral ideas which are fundamental, and which do not change with the change of time and place. Thus it is a universal moral law that an able son should maintain his old parents, and that a man should not steal another's property.

It seems, therefore, clear that art and morality, æstheticism and ethicism have different spheres, and have no connection whatsoever. This line of thinking has given birth to a school of thought which holds that art is for the sake of art alone, and it has nothing to do with morality. If moral considerations sway the mind of an artist, his creative genius would be chained, and it would not have its free play without which no great art can blossom. Art expresses life, that is all ; and if there be any ugly life, and

if there be any indecent thought, it must express it, otherwise it would be guilty of hypocrisy. These champions ask, if man is more animal than rational, why should they express life depicting him more divine. In ancient Greek and Hindu arts such things were allowed to pass unopposed. There are statues and paintings of naked women, in poses, which a gentleman can hardly look at, but these pass off, in polished society, as good specimen of Greek sculpture and painting.

This school of thought in literature gives pictures of abnormal sex-life and supports them as an example of realistic art. Little do their advocates think of our effect that are likely to be produced on the health of our society. Indecent pictures, ugly literature, immoral songs which show only the animal side of a man, and take no account of the divine aspect of him strut on the stage of the art-world as realistic art. Art is neither moral, nor immoral, but a thing on which moral considerations should not be applied at all, and may be called "unmoral".

There is another class of people who hold just opposite ideas. All human activities—and art is no exception to that—must be guided and controlled by moral law. No man can do anything which is calculated to undermine the health of our society. If he does so, the public opinion must stop him, and those who hold sacred human welfare must punish him. The march of man from barbarism to civilization is a long chapter of suppression of his brutal and vulgar instincts. The animal side of man must not be displayed by anybody so that the animal passion, dormant in man, may awaken. An artist, therefore, is not free to do whatever he likes. He lives in a society. If he sows seeds of poison, he will have to reap the harvest thereof.

He must not, therefore, pollute the society with pictures of obscenity and vulgarity.

Though art and morality have their different spheres, yet both deal with life. Art grows out of life ; it is fed by life ; it re-acts upon life. Art does not mean display of only animal side of man, nor morality means a merciless annihilation of all human desires. Moral rules are there for the good of man ; they are not fetters forged to fill up the cup of human misery. "Truth is beauty and beauty is truth." "All art to be great", says Symonds, "must be moralised."

The artist should neither make a conscious effort at moralising, nor should he deliberately defy moral principles. The duty of an artist is creation of joy. But if he engages himself in painting pictures of ugliness to pander to the depraved taste of the vulgar people, and proclaiming it to be an art, it would be a mere abuse of his powers. And equally guilty is he who suppresses all natural and normal human passions, and paints only pictures of divine life, and passes it as whole life. The truth is that a great artist unconsciously becomes a moralist, for beauty is truth, and as for the ordinary artist, he should follow the golden mean between the two extremes. "A poetry of revolt against moral ideas", observes Mathew Arnold, "is a poetry of revolt against life ; a poetry of indifference towards moral ideas is a poetry of indifference towards life."

STUDENTS AND SOCIAL SERVICE

Students are the devotees in the temple of learning. They are born to read, to study books, prepare for examinations and pass them. They must not be allowed to peep through the window of the temple of learning. The hue and cry of the world, the heat and dust of life, generally, do not move them. They live in a thought-world—they muse with Wordsworth, Shelley and Keats, think with Newton, Faraday, meditate with Plato and Socrates. They constitute a class by themselves like the audience of a theatre-hall cut off from the rest of the world.

Student life is a period of preparation for all the problems that face the individual and the community, for the calls, pleasant and unpleasant that are made upon man in society. As a general rule this preparation suffers if he takes part in social activities.

But there are occasions in a nation's life when normal duties suspend and normal life does not function. When a house is on fire, no inmate of it can be allowed to stay inside even if he be in his prayer room with his hands folded and eyes closed. He must come out and take his stand among those who fight fire. He must rescue the children and property from the clutches of fire. Such indeed is the case with a student. When a country faces a calamity, a calamity which cannot be fought by the ordinary people, the students must come out and play their glorious role. It is true his education suffers. It is true his promising career receives a set-back. But if a major catastrophe is allowed to pass unchallenged nobody will live. Who lives, if the country dies, and who dies, if the country lives? This, however, does not mean that the

students who constitute the very vitality of the nation should be mortgaged early by exacting an untimely and unnecessary toll of blood from them.

Even in normal time the students perform many acts of social service. Under the auspices of the University Institute, Calcutta students have launched in an educational campaign to drive out illiteracy from Bengal. During vacations the summer and the Puja—they go out in villages and instruct the illiterate. The students have formed themselves into Communal Peace Brigade to foster communal peace and harmony.

By the grace of the present Great War, India is passing through a period of grave national peril. Never before the students were called upon to perform so hard, so various, so sacrificing duties as at present. The enemy is at our very door. We are in war-zone. Various problems have raised their heads. The scarcity of food has resulted in a devastating famine. Flood has paid its kind visits rather too frequently and in its wake come Cholera, Malaria and give the finishing touch to the work of ruin and destruction. The problems of clothes, of medicine, of evacuation, of education, of railway transport have made life more miserable than the menace of aerial bombing. The dire economic stringency has compelled many students to join in active military service, or in clerical service in military departments or in Civic Guards, A. R. P. etc. But the students are students. Whatever be the dangers and difficulties the students are equal to the task.

The students are the servants of society, the students are the makers of society. They are the soldiers of peace. In them burns the spark of divine fire. Selfishness and narrowness they know not. Full of idealism, enthusiasm,

liberalism, they can perform miracles. They fight fire where there is no fire-brigade. They nurse men and women where there is no hospital. They feed the hungry when food is scarce. They protect the honour of women when the human devil soils it. They burn and bury the dead where there is no burning ghat or burial place. In flood they beg money from the rich, raise funds, rescue people, feed the hungry and nurse the sick and clothe the naked. In cheap and free canteens they serve as volunteers. Dangers and difficulties they know not. Where men and women hesitate to go, they run. They have no children to take care of, no dependants to feed, no property to look after. The wiles of the world have not yet corrupted their soul and they believe in men and in their words and find delight in serving them. They cannot bear the sight of misery. They love to remove tears from the weeping, sobs from the sighing, cries from those who have lost their all. They maintain the health and beauty of the society. They are really the pillars of society.

They are the missionaries of social reform. When a father wants to sell his son in the marriage market and makes a vigorous search for the highest bidder, he marries an accomplished girl without taking a single pice. He sets examples in social life and advances the cause of social upliftment.

"The task of the student," says Swami Vivekananda, "is among the lowliest and the lost. What our country now wants are muscles of iron, nerves of steel, gigantic will which nothing can resist, which can penetrate into the mysteries and secrets of the universe and will accomplish their purpose in any fashion even if it meant going down to the bottom of the ocean and meeting death face to face".

When a cyclone passes over a land and renders men and women homeless and shelterless, it is the students who stand by their side. When an epidemic breaks out and turns a smiling land of plenty to a desert, it is again the students who save them from the jaws of death. When a famine visits a country and thousands die, it is the students who come to their rescue and save life and property.

The services rendered by students in various walks of social life afford also opportunities to them to learn how to grapple with the icy realities of life. And they come out of these ordeals with more glory and more honour.

HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY

One of the main planks of the constructive programme of the Indian National Congress is Hindu-Muslim unity. The Congress realized that union is strength, and that a united demand of the two major communities for political power from Britain would be irresistible. So the Congress preached the gospel of unity. And the Hindus and the Muslims rallied round the banner of the Congress. But the path of the Congress is not strewn with roses. A section of the Muslims soon realized that joining in hands with the Congress would mean personal sacrifice and suffering, courting imprisonment, and meeting non-violently the violent police baton. They, with others, formed a League for themselves and told the Muslim mass that they constituted a separate nation, and were wholly different from the Hindus in race, religion and culture, and joining in the Congress would mean their political suicide. This propaganda made the Hindu Mahasabha, an organisation to

safeguard Hindu religion and culture restive, and it came out, on the political arena, to fight for the Hindu political rights. And from the Congress seceded a number of men, both Hindus and Muslims, men who had suffered and sacrificed for the sake of the country. The Congress made gigantic efforts for unity. Logic was tired; reason was fatigued. It tried various formulas, often sacrificing what impartial observers characterized as legitimate Hindu rights for the political emancipation of our motherland—but all schemes were attacked and torpedoed.

In the meanwhile a section of the people of both the communities carried on a tearing and raging campaign for the consolidation of each community, not to wrest political power but to share it. Their irresponsible utterances, emotional outbursts, and a ceaseless propaganda of hatred and contempt sowed seeds of poison, and found and still find natural expressions in communal riots. And in the name of religion innocent men and women are murdered, property looted, houses set on fire in cold blood,—much to the amusement of the people who want to keep India divided, and in bondage.

In the second Round Table Conference when the leaders failed to agree regarding the question of communal representation in the Legislature, and the Mahatma argued and wept in the wilderness, the late Mr. Ramsay Macdonald gave his decision known as the Communal Award. This "Award" is a veritable apple of discord, and has been characterized by impartial observers as, "anti-national and unjust to the Hindus." This has further embittered the communal feelings, and a section of the Muslims is clamouring for a physical division of India for themselves known as *Pakistan*.

The Hindus and the Muslims have been living in India, side by side, in harmony and peace for centuries. But with the dissemination of communal poison, things have come to such a pass that a Muslim now suspects, distrusts and hates a Hindu and so does a Hindu a Muslim. And the British authorities make capital out of it. First agreement, then political concession—cry the British statesmen. First political concession, and next agreement—retort the Indian statesmen. Unity is not a pre-requisite of freedom in any country. If so, South Africa could not get her freedom 40 years ago. There was no internal unity in Ireland when political concession was granted to her. China was not united, when her freedom was guaranteed by Britain and America. There was a time in England when the Roman Catholics and the Protestants fought, but that was not considered for her political advancement. With the fall of Singapore, the occupation of Burma and bombing of Chittagong and Calcutta by the Japanese, the supreme need for the promotion of amity and good will between the Hindus and the Muslims is felt by all. "For the real advancement of India" says Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq, "the two communities must sink or swim together."

This communal canker has raised its head even within the sacred precincts of the temple of learning, and the students are being infected with this poison. "If religion", observes Dr. Tagore, "instead of abiding in the heart, is allowed to put its emphasis on memorized texts and outward observances; it becomes the greatest of all obstacles to peace. We should, therefore, look to the essence of religion, and not on its outward forms. Ghazi Mustafa Kemal has demonstrated that in the conduct of national affairs religion can have no primacy."

Hindu-Muslim unity is not possible so long as both these major communities strive for the betterment of each community. We should, therefore, try for the welfare of both the communities, and that can be best done when political power is wrested from the British authorities. Instead of joining in the struggle to wrest power from unwilling hands, we should not be anxious to share such power, and be mad for loaves and fishes of office.

"If the Hindus and the Muslims", suggests Dr. Tagore, "can have a common ideal of national welfare, and that ideal can find concrete shape in some system of common government then their external differences will become negligible, compared with the unification arising out of common endeavour and fellow feeling." We should also remember that racial characteristics do not change by the change of faith, for while religion pertains to conscience, race denotes the distinguishing features of the human species. Internal discord must not be allowed to sabotage our national movement.

Indian history points out clearly that in architecture, painting, and above all, in the divine art of music both Hindu and Muslim cultures have been amalgamated. Both the Hindus and the Muslims must look upon India as their motherland. "In unity alone", observes Sir Mirza Ismail, "there is freedom and in freedom alone lies real life and happiness. We must not, in any sense whatever, be separate; ours must be the virtue, ours the power and glory of a single nationhood. To me, 'India, one nation'—is a most inspiring thought and a most reasonable one. This is the land of all of us to whatever race or creed we may belong.

This is the best antidote to communal poison. In the "Outlines of Islamic Culture" Prof. Shastri observes, "The day has come when religious differences must disappear, and the followers of all religions in India must live in harmony, and form one solid nation, possessing one common political objective and aim." Let us realize the full meaning of the saying "United we stand, divided we fall."

THE STAGE AND THE SCREEN

Before the development of science the stage had its unique days in the world of human amusement and recreation. There was none to challenge its right, none to dispute its authority. For centuries, it had enjoyed its such unique position. With the birth of cinema, a new promising child was born to challenge its undisputed sway. But in the days of silent pictures, the screen could not much affect the stage. And the stage, in view of its impending fight with the screen, adapted itself to the changed circumstances. The electric light, the revolving stage, the improvements effected in scenes and sceneries on scientific methods revolutionized the old stage. Thus fortified, it did not entertain any fear from the new born babe—the silent cinema show. In the silent pictures, the story was told by the postures and gestures and movements of the artists. And the poses of the artists told facts, and their eyes were eloquent. But this did not satisfy a large class of the people who wanted to gather the story from the lips of the artists, and what is more, they wanted to see the artists in flesh and blood.

But, with the introduction of the talkie, the stage finds a formidable foe. The artists talk on the screen, and the pictures move and talk in such a life-like way that we often take the artists on the screen as men in flesh and blood. People then rushed to the gates of the talkies, and many thought that it was the death-knell of the stage. Few people began to visit the precincts of the stage, the precincts once held sacred. The authorities of the stage found that one of the main reasons which accounted for the great popularity of the talkies was cheapness of rates of admis-

sion, and they introduced this also in the stage. This was a move to popularise it among the mass. The subject matter of play has also been changed, and modern social pictures with lively dialogues, spiced with sallies of wit, and humour and songs are being staged.

Another reason of popularity of the talkie is that it ends in about two hours, while a drama on the stage detains a person for about three hours. In this busy world of ours we can ill afford spare to devote such a long period for recreationn. And the greatest punishment that the stage inflicts on the audience is the delay in the beginning of a scene after the fall of the drop scene. To do away with this difficulty, the stage authorities have introduced what is called non-stop show. And the popularity of the stage has been thus enhanced. It will be thus seen that the stage in its fight to live, if not with a desire to kill, by the side of the talkies, has adapted itself, step by step, to the changing requirements of the time.

Though both the stage and the screen represent life in action yet, in technique and design they are poles asunder. Verbal expressions accompany postures and gestures in all representations of life in action. But on the stage the former element predominates over the latter, while in the case of the screen, the latter element predominates over the former. Let us understand it by an example. In a drama relayed from a Broadcasting station we hear only words and we have to imagine the postures and persons of the artists. In the case of a silent cinema picture we get only postures ; we have to imagine the words.

The artists in a drama in their postures and gestures have to confine themselves to the prominent parts of their body, the parts which are easily seen by the audience from

the remotest part of the house. Thus the artists have to control their natural expressions to a certain extent. In a talkie, however, the minutest sound and the least perceptible movements of the artists are caught in the camera and the sound-recording machine. It is no wonder then that the greatest artist on the stage may not be the greatest artist on the screen (cf Mr. Sisir Kumar Bhaduri). A great artist on the screen may not be a great artist on the stage (cf Mr. Ashok Kumar). There are only a few who can master both the techniques, and become successful, both on the stage, and on the screen (cf Mr. Ahindra Choudhury.)

In the stage the audience is a necessary part of it. The clap, the criticism, the sighs, the shouts, the silent admiring looks inspire, or depress the artists and sway their feelings. To a certain extent the success or failure of a drama staged often depends on the attitude of the audience. But in the case of a screen-play, the shouts of the audience move none except their fellows. Each play on the stage has a separate life; no two plays are identical. And the presence of the artists in flesh and blood inspires a sense of confidence in the mind of the audience. But the talkie is a machine play, unreal; it rotates monotonously in the the same fashion.

The stage and the screen though must fight each other on the economic field, each trying its utmost to have a packed house, but in the realm of art and amusement they are not rivals. They follow the two sister roads of art-technique for human enjoyment and recreation, and are friends.

DISCIPLINE

Man does not live alone ; he lives with many others. When one lives with many for the well being of all, there must be some rules for the guidance of their conduct. A member of a society cannot be permitted to do whatever he likes. If he does, the evil forces of disorder, and disruption will be let loose, and the onward march of civilization will be arrested. If everybody commands, and nobody obeys there is clear chaos. Discipline is obedience to the rules framed for the regulation of human conduct. It is a training to forego, with a smile, should the occasion arise, personal gain, and to accept, without a protest, however unjust, it may appear to be, any punishment.

The ancient world believed only in two forms of discipline, military and monastic. There is also a discipline of habit which may be called a moral suasion which springs from within and not from without.

From the heaven above to the earth below, discipline reigns supreme. The earth, the moon and the stars move round the sun, not by fits and starts, but according to certain rules. They are all disciplined under the mighty sun. Even the animals are disciplined under their leader, and the penalty for the breach is often death. The life of the bees in a hive is very disciplined. It may be their instinct, but there it is. Coming down to man we find that man never loves "unchartered life", and even in the crude state of society there was discipline. If a savage obeys anything, he obeys the laws of his clan. They are to him the voices of God. In any organization, social, political, religious, economic and educational, discipline is essential, essential for its growth and development.

There are however men who sneer at the name of discipline. Discipline, they think, is a negation of individual liberty, and a life chained in an iron cage. That is a distorted picture of the whole thing. Discipline does not mean iron rule, the regulation of life before the sleepless eyes of a police man, with a baton in his hand. Rules for behaviour and regulation of conduct must be there, if an organization is to be run smoothly and flourished. If an individual is sincerely of the opinion that a particular rule is oppressive and is to be altered, it is open to him to get it done by lawful means. The fundamental principle is that the organization lives for the individual and not the individual for the organization.

It will be found even from the physical constitution of man that the various organs of the body cooperate with one another, and are disciplined for the maintenance, growth and development of the whole body. In every house there is a sort of government, autocracy or aristocracy or democracy. All the members of the house obey the rules of the house. He who breaks them suffers, and is even expelled from the house. A disciplined house under a head is like a team under a captain, and must rise, though be placed in ill circumstances. The absence of self-control in an individual results in his sufferings, loss and ruin. The sufferings of Michael M. Dutt, Shelley and Byron are instances in point.

The sports teach us discipline. A disciplined team though weak has greater advantage over its rival though strong but is disorganized. Here the individual players subordinate their individual selfishness to the larger interests of the party. In an educational institution not only discipline is maintained but it is taught. But here

we are to remember that the children are children, and they are there to learn. Here, if there be anywhere at all, the law is to be administered with love and is to be observed with love as well. And again discipline is to be taught not by precepts but by examples. No where perhaps discipline is more necessary than in the army. Here a moment's hesitation may mean death. Difficulty, danger, nay, death cannot deter a soldier from carrying out the orders of his commander, even if they are unjust and wrong.

- "Their's not to make reply
Their's not to reason why
Their's but to do and die."

Discipline is a precious treasure for the growth of society. Life without discipline is a ship without a rudder. Discipline does not mean picking up holes to find fault with. It is a rod to check the erring, a brake to control the thoughtless speed of man-machine. It is a friend to guide ; it is there not to crush and kill the individual liberty and initiative. Punishment for breach of discipline is, therefore, justified. But there are occasions in the life of a nation when technical breach of discipline is to be overlooked for the sake of the larger interests of the nation. Little minds and great things go ill together. In an educational institution rules and regulations are to be framed in an attitude of affection, giving the maximum freedom to the individual, consistent with the collective life in an organization. And the bitterness of discipline will disappear.

THE STRIKE

One of the baffling problems which modern industrialism has given birth to is the conflict between the capitalist and the labourer. Both capital and labour have their honoured share in production. Everybody acknowledges it. But the fight is with the division of spoils, that is, the fruits of their joint labour. The capitalist takes the lion's share of the profits, and is getting fattened day by day. The labourer wants to live and demands the luxury of two meals a day. The one stands for luxury, and the other for livelihood; the one wants butter, the other only a piece of bread. The capitalist is rich, educated and well organized, while the labourer is poor, illiterate and divided. The fight between the two looks like a fight between a giant and a dwarf. But such is the power of organization, the value of the principle "*Union is strength*," that the labourers when united can shake the throne of a mighty emperor.

The weapon with which the labourer fights against such a formidable foe as the capitalist is the *strike*. It is the weapon of those whose strength lies not in wealth, nor in learning, but in unity, in large number. It is a weapon of the weak many against the strong few. In the proper sense of the term, it is voluntary cessation of work by the labourers to redress their just grievances. The weapon instead of being confined to economic world is also applied to other spheres of life as well. In an educational institution, when the authorities turn a deaf ear to any reasonable proposal of the students made jointly, they cease to attend their classes until their grievances are redressed. Workers have many ways of showing resentment of bad treatment, real or imaginary, The simplest and time-

honoured method is to drop work and walk-out. Variations include sit-down strikes, lie-down strikes, organised rioting and wrecking of machinery.

Success in a strike depends on various factors most important of which are solidarity among the workers, the brain-power behind them and the reserve fund of the labourers on which they must fall back during the period of a strike. It should be voluntary, spontaneous and peaceful. If violence is resorted to, it is bound to fail. It loses its charm. It forfeits the sympathy of the public. It degenerates into riot, arson and murder. Once the passion of the illiterate workers is roused, no body's head is safe and secure. A great responsibility therefore rests on the labour leaders who foment strikes.

The principles of Communism, and of equality are in the air. These theories are spread by some, out of a genuine love for the poor oppressed. But let us take note that there are many who spread these for personal axe to grind. When gentlemen, with education and culture, come forward and pose as labourers' friends the illiterate trust them. These leaders fan the flames of labour-discontent and engineer strikes. But when the occasion to face the grim situation comes, they take to their heels, leaving the poor labourers to court the charges of the bayonet of the authorities of law and order. Again, there are occasions when these self-seeking leaders surrender the just rights of the labourers for personal gains received by them. Before joining in a strike, the labourers should formulate their just grievances, and leave them in the hands of their trusted and tried leaders and stand by them.

Untold sufferings are caused by a strike to the innocent public. If the workers of the railway service go on a

strike not only the passengers and mails are held up, and communication is suspended, but the price of articles goes up. If the scavengers of the Corporation of Calcutta cease to discharge their duties for a week only, epidemic will break out and not a few people will die. If the workers of the Calcutta Electric Supply Corporation refuse to do their work in a body, the streets of Calcutta would go unlighted, giving a merry day for the hooligans, and a hard task for the police. London Dock strike, the Calcutta Tramway conductor's strike, the B. N. Ry. strike are cases in point.

True, a strike causes a great hardship to the innocent people, people who have no connection whatsoever with the dispute. But the real burden falls on the shoulders of the strikers themselves. It is indeed a question of their life and death. They live on their poor reserve fund, public charity, Union loan or help. The consequences of an unsuccessful strike are very gloomy. It leads to the dismissal of many, and the punishment of some, thus swelling the number of the unemployed.

The demands of the workers should also be just and reasonable. If they are pitched high and if a strike is put as a threat at every "no" of the capitalist, no progress in arts and industries is possible.

A strike is a very sharp weapon. And if conducted in the proper line, it must be crowned with success. It is a rare weapon and should be sparingly used. When all the ways to settlement are found to be blocked, when the capitalist persistently turns a deaf ear to the just appeals and prayers of the workers, then and only then they should go on a strike,

THE STUDY OF BIOGRAPHY

Biography is the record of a man's life, his activities, his successes and failures, his smiles and tears, and his hopes and fears. It is the history of an individual. When one writes one's own life-story, it is called autobiography. History is the record of the activities of a nation and individuals constitute an important part of a nation. In order to know a nation, therefore, we should study, among other things, the biography of the individuals, individuals good and great, individuals which are representative of the nation.

The study of biography of a greatman is always a source of inspiration. It points out the correct way to success, warns us of the pitfalls of life, the snares of circumstances and the foul conspiracy of the mean villain. It is "a kindly light" which leads on the way-lost traveller among "the encircling gloom". It is a "light to guide and a rod to check the erring". It shows us how we can "make our lives sublime". From the pages of a biography we know the grim determination with which a great man faces difficulties, and the patience with which he fights them, and the skill with which he triumphs. Once more patience and fortitude return and we take up the challenge of life, and strive and seek and find. The biography of Abraham Lincoln is a source of inspiration to the ambitious poor, to the down-trodden is Booker T. Washington's, to the scientists are Faraday's, and Newton's, to the statesmen Disraeli's and Gladstone's and to the religious men are Christ's, Buddha's and Sree Ram Krishna's. There are instances of men who from an ordinary life were turned into saints, having been influenced by the study of

biography. Example is better than precept—is an old proverb.

Biography teaches us many a lesson. It is a mirror of the age in which the man in question flourishes. His thoughts, his likes and dislikes, hopes and aspirations throw a flood of light on the contemporary society. Boswell's life of Johnson, Lockhart's Scott are cases in point. Jogendra Nath Bose's life on Michael Madhusudhan in Bengali is another good instance.

There are men and men. There are men who come, strut and fret on the stage of life and go—go unknown, unhonoured and unsung. Biographies of these men are seldom written, and if written, are seldom read, and if read are seldom interesting. There are again men who are really great or good. But they fight shy of publicity. They are silent workers in their respective spheres. They remain often obscure; they are born to blush unseen. No Boswell records their sayings. No Vivekananda carries their mission far and wide. There are again worse people, who move with their own men, who beat their master's drums, and succeed in creating a halo of false glory round him. Biographies of these men do not stand the crucial test of time. The artificial halo cast round their names fades with the passage of time, and they are revealed in their ugliness.

There are others, the pillars of society, representative men of the age, saints, statesmen and scholars of all ages and all times. Their glory brightens day by day, and biographies of these men are fountains of strength and inspiration to all. Carlyle has given the names of greatmen in his *Heroes and Hero Worship*. Emerson has written sketches of greatmen in his *Representative Men*, Gardiner *Pillars of Society*, and Strachey *Eminent Victorians*.

Preachers of precepts, teachers of moral maxims are many. But faithful followers are few. Biographies of greatmen are living examples of these precepts. It has been well said that the precepts are the nails, while the greatmen practising these precepts in their daily life are hammers, for they drive home these nails on man.

Unfortunately a biography is often not a faithful record of life. There are biographers who sacrifice truth at the altar of personal considerations. Man wars not with the dead—is a wrong idea particularly when his life is to be recorded. To the dead, we owe only truth. There are different biographies of Napoleon and they present not the different poses, but pictures of the great man. To prevent misinterpretation a greatman often writes out his own biography, called autobiography.

The perseverance of a spider inspired Robert Bruce. The study of biography inspires many a Robert Bruce defeated and disgraced in the battle of life.

A COMMON LANGUAGE FOR INDIA

In India there is verily a Babel of tongues ; India speaks in different languages. With the growth of national consciousness, with the realization that India is fundamentally one, and must be regarded as a single political entity, the necessity of finding out a common language, the *Lingua Franca India*, a language which will serve as a common medium for exchange of ideas among Indians themselves, was keenly felt. As to the necessity of such a common medium of expression there can hardly be two opinions, but as to which of the many great languages of India would

enjoy that honour and privilege is the problem. The question has been debated and discussed and much heat and dust unnecessarily caused.

There are people who, dazzled at the wealth and beauty of English, champion it for such medium of expression. But the suggestion has not been accepted, owing to various reasons the chief of which are that it is not a language for the Indian mass, and that it is foreign. The *Lingua Franca Indica* must be an Indian language—this is the common view. It must be the language of a large number of the Indians, if not of the actual majority. The grammar of such a language must be very simple and it must be capable of growth, development and expansion, and must keep pace with the growth of new and novel ideas of the world.

If we apply these tests to determine the language which will enjoy the unique honour of being our common language the claims of Tamil, Telegu, Malayalam etc., do not stand a moment's scrutiny. Bengali and Hindusthani remain in the field, each claiming for recognition as such. When we speak of Hindusthani we leave aside what is called high Hindi or classical Hindi and confine ourselves only with the spoken Hindi.

Throughout the Northern and Central India everybody speaks and understands Hindi. According to the census the number of people speaking Bengali is about 5 crores. But if Western Urdu and Eastern Hindi, and Rajasthani were included in Hindusthani the number of people who could speak and understand Hindusthani would be not less than 14 or 15 crores. This means that the position of Hindusthani among the languages of the world is second or third. But Hindusthani is a vague expression. In a sense it includes Urdu as well as Hindi though its script is

different. As a spoken language also it has different forms. Pandit Malaviya's Hindi is different from Dr. Azad's Hindi and Mahatma's Hindi differs from Nehru's Hindi.

There are people, however, who are up in arms against Hindusthani. They think that really Urdu is being pushed for political reasons as the national language of India in the name of Hindusthani, and accuses Gandhiji for this. "An insidious attempt is being made," writes Prof. Murlidhar, "to foist upon unsuspecting India, in the name of Mahatma and the Congress, a *Lingua Franca*, called Hindusthani which would be nothing but Urdu, pure and simple—a hotch-potch of Arabic and Persian with a sprinkling of Hindi, spiced with a pinch of English—a nauseating preparation of the witches' cauldron. If *Lingua Franca* is to be meant for the vehicle of the literary, political, and scientific thought of the nation, a language for the drawing-room, a speech for the polite intercourse it would be very poor indeed."

There are people in Bengal who have raised a voice of protest against Hindi's claim for such recognition. It is not because that the Bengalees generally do not understand Hindi. It is because Bengalees regard their mother tongue as the richest in India, a truth recognized by all the educated in India. It is because a greater number of people talk in Bengali than people who talk in pure Hindi. It is also true that the Bengali grammar has been very simplified by the efforts of Dr. Tagore, and Dr. Suniti Chatterji. But a sense of pride for our own tongue should not make us blind to hard facts. Outside Bengal Bengali is seldom talked except by the Bengalees among themselves. Even Bengalees speak Hindi when they go out of Bengal. Hindi is fast spreading in Bengal itself. Impelled by necessity even Bengalee women have to speak Hindi with their

servants, cook, darwan etc. The foreigners learn only Hindi to talk with the Indian mass.

The competent scholars have highly spoken of the wealth of Hindi literature and its rich vocabulary. It has its connection with Sanskrit; it has connection with Urdu, rich in Persian words. From the point of view of grammar the Hindi is very simple. But the great difficulty with Hindi is its Devnagri script which is not very easy for the mass. The solution of this problem has been suggested by S. Subhas Ch. Bose. He suggests the acceptance of Roman alphabets with necessary changes.

For a common medium of expression, for the *Lingua Franca* of India the claim of Hindi is generally admitted though not without protests from Bengal. The Congress has accepted it and Dr. Rajendra Prasad has been popularising it. Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterji, Professor of Linguistics, Calcutta University also prescribes, in his Oxford Indian pamphlet on languages and linguistic problems, the introduction of simplified Hindi or Hindusthani written in a modified Roman alphabet as the common and national language of India.

THE CHOICE OF A PROFESSION

Nothing is more difficult than the choice of a profession. And a time comes in everybody's life when it must be chosen. The sooner it is done the better. The child shows the man as morning shows the day. He is the budding flower. He is a citizen of to-morrow. He is the would be bread-earner of the family. The child cannot choose, the boy cannot choose, the youth cannot choose. The

tender age and inexperienced stand in the way. The youth does not know his real likes and dislikes. He does not clearly know his particular bent of mind. He does not know how to measure his ability and intelligence. And above all, he does not know the crooked ways of the wide world, the future prospect, the snares and pitfalls of life. Many a profession will dazzle his young vision, and may tempt him to a wrong path. The parents, with the help of the teacher, may help to choose the right profession for the young child. But in doing so, the parents must not forcibly thrust their own desires.

A lawyer father, disgusted with law and lies, may urge his son, who is born to shine as a legal luminary, to leave law, and study medicine. A doctor father may thrust his unwilling artist daughter the noble and bright career of a physican. The result in such cases is a foregone conclusion. In the struggle for existence where the fittest only survive, they are kicked out, and in their old age they curse the fine morning when they made the wrong choice. The ability of a man must be the main factor in chalking out a career for him. The bent of mind, the inclination of the student must be taken into consideration in his choice of a profession.

The choice is necessary before the youth advances far in his education. It should be made as soon as the students join in college classes, if not earlier. A wrong choice mars one's career while a right one makes it. A born blacksmith cannot be expected to be an expert violinist. A good mechanic may spend his fruitless life as an unprofitable lawyer. Indeed, the wrong choice in profession has been the fruitful cause of ill employment, if not unemployment. Those who defer the choice, drift in the tide of circumstances, and seldom come out successful in life. Those who

hesitate and debate, "to be or not to be" to the choice of a profession make a shipwreck of their life.

There are many who would try their luck on a number of professions, not being sure which particular one will suit them. They turn Jacks of all trades but masters of none. A rolling stone gathers no moss. This is often due to the fact that a man's real ability has never been rightly measured. A wrong man in the wrong place can never shine. A round peg can never be adjusted in a square hole. Those who attempt to do so are lost in life's battle. Once the choice is made, the die is cast. We must cling to it and with steady perseverance, our efforts would be crowned with success.

The choice of a profession often depends on other practical considerations. The purse of the parents is a potent factor in picking up a career. Chill penury represses many a noble and aspiring soul. Many an inglorious Milton may remain unknown and unhonoured in the country for want of a proper opportunity. It is true that a genius can create opportunities for him. But every man is not a genius. In making, therefore, the choice we should take into account all the circumstances, the ability of the youth, the power of the purse of his parents, the trend of events of the world before he makes a choice and plunges into the vortex life.

Every vocation demands certain physical qualities as also certain specific psychological attributes such as talents, and temperaments, from those who enter it, and only those individuals who satisfy these requirements can be successful in it. This requires the study of the individual in all its aspects, physical, psychological and others. The Psychology Department of Calcutta University has added a section of Applied Psychology to render vocational

guidance to those who seek it. The section measures scientifically intelligence of the candidate together with certain group factors necessary for each profession. The temperamental qualities in the individual are also determined by psychological processes. No less important is their study of unconscious processes and tendencies of the individual. The unconscious part of the mind is the ground upon which grow the interests, motives, ambitions, aversions etc. Nobody ever questions the necessity and importance of vocational psychology for proper vocational selection and guidance. In England the National Institute of Industrial psychology gives vocational guidance to the British boys, and helps the industrialists in various ways. Every student should, in case he finds difficulty in choosing his career, submit himself to the test of this Applied Section, and see for himself what service it can render to him.

They say that the educated should take to agriculture, to trade and industry and that they should not crowd the over-crowded professions like the Bar. But men,—gentlemen cannot turn overnight cultivators and businessmen. These professions require training and what is more necessary, physical and mental equipment. Without these, without being armed with the practical knowledge of the world, it would be dangerous to risk one's career in these slippery vocations. True, no risk no gain. But that does not justify a leap into darkness, lured by the dazzle of the wealth of a Ford, a Bata, or a Sir Rajen Mukherji. What is wanted is real preparation for the career we choose. The educated idealist who takes to business without the necessary preparation is soon disillusioned and finds to his surprise, his money gone and business ruined.

STUDENT LIFE, ITS PLEASURES AND DUTIES

In a narrow sense, student life is the period when a man remains attached to an Institution, academic or technical, and when his be-all and end-all in life is to pass examinations. In a wide sense, however, it is the whole period of a life's training, whether at an Institution, or in the wide world. Shakespeare and Shaw, Tagore and Sarat Chatterjee had been only a few years in educational institutions, but their span of real student life was longer than that. Student life is a period of preparation—preparation for all the problems that face the individual and the community, for the calls, pleasant or unpleasant, that are made upon man in society. It is the period when a man fills his mind with the fuel of ideas, sufficient that he may safely sail on the voyage of life, and may not cry, "Help," when thrown into the vortex of life. It is the period when a man picks up weapons from Nature's armoury to fight life's battle.

The student-life has its smiles and tears, joys and sorrows. To many the student-life is the period "when everything appears appalled in celestial light." Gray has sung the glories of student-life in his Eton Ode.

Among the members of the family the student is a king whose pleasures everybody seeks, whose discomfort everybody is anxious to remove, whose orders everybody respects, and whom everybody loves. Every member of the family looks upon him as the future bread-earner; he must be pleased so that in his later life his economic help, if necessary, may be sought and obtained. Even law which is no respecter of persons respects a student. His lapses are taken in a light vein, and when others found guilty are put into prison, he is simply warned and let off.

The parents may be ill-fed, and ill-clad, but they smilingly court any hardship for their student-children. On them lives the hope of to-morrow, on them rests the good name of the family ; on them hangs the fate of the future of the house. It is not for them to sit pensively, resting their tired foreheads on their anxious palms, and think on the marriage problem of grown up daughters of the family, or the employment problem of the educated youth of the house. The cries of the children, the sobs of the housewife, the sighs of neighbours do not concern a student. He is seldom troubled with the wants of the family and the difficulties of the house, lest he is disturbed in the pursuit of his studies. He sings and swims, moves and dances. If anybody disturbs him, the whole army constituting the members of the family would rise as one man, and attack the disturber.

There is no rose without a thorn, no rights without duties, and no pleasures without pains. No wonder then that a student has certain duties—duties onerous and exacting. He has to discharge duties to his ownself, to his parents, to his family, to his country, to the wide world, and, what is more, to God.

“To thine oneself be true”—is the voice of wisdom, which if listened to in student-life must bear rich fruit in later life. True, the path of duty is the way to glory. But the path of duty is not a bed of roses ; it is a path full of thorns. Again there are occasions when conflicts of duty arise, when the right path is lost sight of in a smoke-screen of interested propaganda.

The student life is a life of discipline. Discipline demands a good deal of toleration and sacrifice. A student without a sense of discipline is a ship without a rudder,—it

sails adrift and never comes to the harbour safe. These are no doubt the days of democracy and individualism. Every adult is free to think, feel and do as he likes, and any interference with that is always resented. If a student is really in a position to judge his own welfare, apart from any help of his elders, well and good. It is for him to realize that he is to make or mar the glory of his family. The voice of age and experience is the voice of wisdom, and it is entitled to respect. Inexperienced in the ways of the world, full of emotion, idealism, a student, unaided, is likely to commit blunders often impossible to mend.

The task of the student is among the lowliest and the lost. It is for him to answer to the clarion call of Swami Vivekananda,—“What our country now wants are muscles of iron, nerves of steel, gigantic will which nothing can resist, which can penetrate into the mysteries and secrets of the universe and will accomplish their purpose in any fashion, even if it means going down to the bottom of the ocean and meeting death face to face.”

One of the knotty problems is whether, if at all, how far a student should participate in politics. Many urge him not to dabble in politics. Active participation in day-to-day politics is never conducive to the student life ; it often makes a ship-wreck of a promising career. But there is nothing wrong for a student to here a Bose, or an M. N. Roy, or to join in a demonstration. When however a storm bursts out, a political cyclone sweeps over a country and the people are engaged in a life and death struggle to resist the bomb of a Hitler or a Mussolini or the militarism of Japan, the students must leave their temple of learning and fight out the battle of freedom. But vitality of the nation should not be mortgaged by exacting an untimely

toll of blood from the youth. A student should not allow himself to be used as a pawn in the political game of his elders.

Student life has, therefore, its peculiar pleasures and pains, privileges and duties, joys and sorrows. It is the best period of man's life, and must be utilized as such. Opportunities once slipped in this life would seldom come again; mistakes once committed in this period can hardly be rectified later on.

LITERARY EDUCATION—VERSUS—SCIENTIFIC EDUCATION

Time was when there was a battle royal fought between the champions of literary education on the one hand, and scientific education on the other. That was at the dawn of the 19th century, with the birth of the modern world. One fine morning, man woke up from his slumber to find the world changed by a magician. That magician is science. Man no longer is the helpless toy of Nature, but has become the conqueror of land, water and air. The triumphs of science dazzled the vision of man. Up rose men to champion the cause of science and its intense study, and it seemed, the death-knell to literary education was heard. With the lapse of a number of years, the feverish heat for science-worship subsided. It was realised that with mother science not only came nectar, but poison as well. And yet she remains the favourite of many. Animosity once born dies hard, notwithstanding the sanctity of the temple of learning. And so are often heard the voices of protest and

the growls of opposition between the two schools of thought, science and arts.

But this conflict vanishes into air when we reach a higher plane. For, as a matter of fact, science does not war with arts, nor do the latter with the former. There is no fight between the two. They go hand in hand for the benefit of man. Both aim at joy, at the expansion of the mental horizon. They are the two sister roads, not in rivalry but uniting often in embraces of love to the march of man in the realisation of his ownself.

Standing at the threshold of their college-career most of the students pause for a while. They weigh the respective merits and demerits of the two branches of learning. They ask themselves whether they would take up the test tube, and spend hours in the laboratory with eyes wide open, or would muse with the muses and meditate with the seers, with eyes shut. Science lifts up the veil of Nature and reveals her secret beauty, Arts give us solace in our troubled life, and exercise humanizing influences. The former is precious in the material world, and the latter is precious in the realm of thought. Both are however essential for man.

This is an age of materialism and machine. The triumphs of science are all around us. The fruits of scientific education are many and various. They are tempting and alluring. And a man falls an easy victim to the glare of science. But if science has given us blessings and joys, it has equally given us problems difficult to solve, dangers hard to overcome. The great men of the world have already voiced a protest, and given a solemn warning against the scientific invention. No mechanical improvement, they point out, elevates the stature of man; that grows only with his intellectual nobility. Whether an aeroplane is a

boon or a bane, may be discussed and debated. But whether the study of Shakespeare is good or bad can never be debated.

Different men have different tastes. There are people who want to pursue their peaceful life communing with Nature, musing on life, religion and arts. The benignities of literature defy fortune, and outlive calamity. They are beyond the reach of a thief, or a moth or rust. The triumphs of science do not attract them. Many may be induced to study science, but there will always be some who would cling to literary education. Thus there may be seceders from the camp of literary education, but it will never be empty. And it is not too much to expect that when man would realise the nature of mischief science has done to man and civilisation, the pendulum may swing again and the seceders may rejoin their camp with a large number of followers in triumph.

To a Botanist the sight of a rose revives in his mind the story of its birth, growth and death. A mountain reveals its heart and tells many a tale of the past to a Geologist. A poet's heart leaps up at the sight of a rainbow in the sky. He dances with the daffodils. In the distant sky, a philosopher finds glimpses of the Infinite. This is an age of science. The achievements of science justify man to be proud. They eclipse the name and fame of the victories of arts. No wonder then that literary education is apt to be looked down upon. Who is greater,—a Dr. Tagore, or a Sir J. C. Bose is a knotty question. But we need both, for both delight man and serve the world.

ANY NOVEL YOU HAVE READ

I frankly confess I am not a lover of novels—English or Bengali. I have read very few English novels and only some Bengali novels. Indeed I look very small in the presence of my friends when they talk tall on Balzac and Bronte, Turgenev and Gorky, George Elliot and Joseph Conrad, Dickens and Defoe. I know not why I am not at home with the novels. All that I can say is that I do not like to move on the surface of the story of a fiction and have a strong desire to go deep down it and find out its inner spring. While marching on with the story as presented, I have to cry halt, take a long pause and muse and meditate. The result is the progress of reading is stopped. But I am not sorry for that for I count on quality and not on quantity. For my aversion to read novels friends dub me as “ignorant”. In self defence I can only say that the story element of a novel is not the whole thing of it. And yet how many of us are content with simply the incidents of a fiction !

I would like to write something on the novel I have just finished—but finished very hurriedly. It is “Far from the Madding Crowd” by Thomas Hardy. It is a big book and I frankly say I have skipped over many places and have not fully understood many situations. But the book has left me with a deep impression.

It is a faithful picture of rural England, a picture of the shepherds and rustics with their smiles and tears, dreams and ideals, their simple faith and honest doubt, their love and romance. The story is woven round the life of Bathsheba, a woman owner of a sheep farm. A poor sheep farmer Oak by name had a chance acquaintance with her and

since then he entertained a peculiar fascination for the lady. But Bathsheba turned down Oak's proposal for marriage. By a freak of fate, Oak lost his farm and sheep and he had to offer himself as a labourer in a sheep farm.

But by an irony of fate, he joined the farm of Bathsheba. Here he, by virtue of his devotion to duty, sincerity of purpose and professional skill, won the love and respect of all the labourers. Bathsheba, however, for her vanity and self-willed nature fell a victim to the love wiles of a senseless seeker of pleasure Sergeant Troy and married him in spite of Oak's warning against this union.

Troy loved and indeed married another girl of a very simple nature Fanny Robin, but abandoned her in very tragic circumstances and she died a sad death. It is very difficult to restrain feelings as Hardy describes the last chapter of her tragic life. The treatment meted out to the dog which carried her is a fine instance of Hardy's grim humour.

Bathsheba was not happy with Troy. Vain as she was, she made another mistake in writing something to a middle-aged bachelor farmer Boldwood which he mistook to be her proposal for marriage. But when confronted with the proposal of marriage Bathsheba flatly refused. This caused a great mental agitation in the mind of Boldwood. Sergeant Troy, when he found his game with Fanny Robin was out, left Bathsheba in such circumstances that led the people to believe that he committed suicide. This emboldened Boldwood to renew his marriage proposal. Bathsheba did not say "no" now but took time. Boldwood now moved in such a way that the people took Bathsheba engaged to him. Unexpectedly however, Troy appeared on the scene but this was too much for Boldwood and in a moment of excitement he shot Troy dead. Boldwood had to pass the rest of his

life in jail. The character of this middle-aged bachelor as drawn by Hardy is a fine study in psychology.

The field was now clear for the silent, suffering and devoted Oak. The bitter experiences of Bathsheba with Troy and Boldwood drove out all fickleness of her mind. Her vanity vanished. The silent services and deep love of Oak attracted her now, and Oak was united with his mistress in bonds of marriage much to the joy of all the shepherds of the locality.

It is a wonderful novel, wonderful not only for the vigour in presentation of facts, or because of the keen psychological sense displayed, or because of development of the different characters but also of its structure and technique. Each of the main characters is a living picture and we have Oak, Bathsheba, Troy and Fanny Robin roaming in the realm of our fancy. It has love and romance but not wildness of thought and irrational outbursts. The description of Bathsheba as Elizabeth in brain but Mary Stuart in spirit and Hardy's observations on Troy and Oak would remain ever fresh in the mind of every of reader this fiction.

LIFE IS ACTION BUT NOT CONTEMPLATION

Coming, as it does, from the pen of Goethe, the great German thinker, the expression is a gem of wisdom. The expression means more than what meets the ordinary eye. It is a gospel of action, action sober, thoughtful and wise. It is not a crusade against contemplation as such. Action here does not include thoughtless or spasmodic action nor contemplation means thought which is father to any

voluntary action. The purport of the saying is that life consists in activities, works and deeds but not in day-dreaming, ideal thinking, soaring on the wings of barren imagination which never sees the light of day.

The glory of man lies in his thought. Without profound meditation, deep contemplation, no great work is possible. Goethe does not glorify here thoughtless action, action of the animal world but draws our attention to the active side of the man, discouraging barren meditation. The great thinker points out the channel through which human energies are to be directed. A man cannot but think and every action worth the name implies some amount of thought. And a great or good action cannot take place without deep thinking. The expression does not stand any other interpretation.

Life is a battle. Thousands of forces of Death are out to crush life. But man fights each one of them and lives. Man wrestles with the dark forces of Nature, with the unfavourable environments around him and struggles with his soul-force within and thus he survives. Life is action, in every inch of it.

A tree is known by its fruits—so runs a proverb. A life is to be measured by the activities. It is true, man is not only a doer of deeds but also a dreamer of dreams and these dreams strengthen him in the performance of his deeds. Contemplation aids man to scheme an action. Contemplation saves man from the pitfalls of life. Contemplation bestows on man all that for which he is Divine. But indulging in pure contemplation, apart from the world, is a luxury of mind and should be discouraged. It is good, indeed, it is absolutely necessary to guide man in his multifarious activities. It is a guide to life and a rod to check

the erring. In the ocean of life, it controls human vessels and checks it from sailing adrift.

A so-called saint renouncing the world passes his days and nights living on air and water in a cave of the Himalayas and is lost in deep contemplation. Whatever may be the value of his meditation in the other world but, in this practical world, it is no life. He ceases to exist socially, economically and materially. This is a life which has been condemned by all great men. Swami Vivekananda, the greatest monk of modern India, has spoken, in no uncertain terms, discouraging pure contemplation and eulogising disinterested action. Indeed, through a life of action, can one attain God. His enunciation of *Karma-Yoga* is a clear call to man for action. Tennyson in his *Ulysses* sings on action that life is activity and that inactivity is death. So long a man lives, he must "strive, seek and find". Wordsworth speaks against those who live "housed in a dream at distance from kind."

Nobody knows what is in the mind of a man. A vain day-dreamer dallies with his wild ideas, dances with his foolish thoughts and fights with his imaginary Napoleon in his closet. He gives out to the world that he is meditating on the new order of the world, when war will be unknown and eternal peace will reign and he eats, drinks and gets fattened. Never he utters a word as to the line of his thought, never he discloses the sacred plan of his rich mind, never he gives any indication as to the rich treasures of his great soul. For all practical purposes he is dead except that his physical existence is a burden on the land. Mere breathing is not life, for insects also breathe. Mere eating is not life, for worms eat as well. Mere moving is not life, for snails also move.

Idle fancy is to be distinguished from necessary contemplation, the former sails in the mind and it soars and roams but never produces anything concrete or abstract, while the latter moulds and shapes every human action worth its name. Goethe emphasises the active side of man. He urges man to lead a life of activity and not to indulge in barren meditation and abstract thought divorced from the real world.

THE INFLUENCE OF THE PRESENT WAR ON INDIA

The flames of the present war are right upon us. With the occupation of Burma, the Andamans and with the bombing of Chittagong, Assam, Calcutta and Madras we are in the war-zone. The present war is a titanic struggle, the like of which history has not witnessed before. And there is no country in the world which is not affected by this war. Situated and circumstanced as we are, we are however directly involved in it.

The Government of India is at war with the axis and we, Indians are fighting with the allies,—fighting with our men, money and resources, fighting with our life and blood. But there are nationalists who think that India is not at war. They refuse to participate in this war unless India's claim for independence is recognised. The Atlantic Charter is there no doubt, but India has no place in it. This deepens the doubt of the Indian nationalists. But India is fighting this war, shoulder to shoulder with the allies, in various theatres of war. And by the law of land, the Defence of India Act, no Indian can do anything against

the war-effort. An Indian, however, may be pardoned, if he does not feel the same warmth and ardour, the same zeal and fire as a Chinese carpenter or a Russian peasant finds in this war. He does not know yet whether he forges fresh fetters for his bondage or he fights for his freedom.

The present war has hit India hard and deep. And India bleeds and weeps. This war has made a gift to India a number of problems, problems unknown and unheard of before. The problems of food, clothes and other necessities of life, of evacuation, of railway journey, of education, of industrial development and commerce and the problem of currency bewilder the Indians.

But no problem is more acute in India than the food problem. In Bengal, the land of the plenty, a terrible famine visited. The parts of India like the Deccan, Travancore, Madras and particularly Bengal are in famine condition. In Bengal the people daily died in thousands. The fire of famine burns down love, affection, sense of duty and loyalty. The hungry mother sells her dear son,—snatches food from her children and fights with the dogs in the dustbin to find out food. This war has robbed the smiles and laughter from the Indian homes. The people are gloomy and morose. The starving man has no ethics, no religion, no politics. A youngman in his home is living in scarcity and poverty; but if he joins the forces, he gets everything and lives in luxury. This is the greatest inducement to join in the war.

The problem of mass evacuation from the places of military importance has caused a great hardship to the people. Some money by way of compensation has been paid but money is a poor solace to men who have no place to live under the sun. The husbands have been parted

from wives, children from parents. The hardship is increased tenfold, when we remember the comforts of the war-time railway journey. He is like a ship cut off from the moorings of the harbour and he sails adrift.

War has hampered the cause of education in this country. Owing to the threat of aërial bombing, and evacuation, and famine many educational institutions have ceased to exist. Foreign books are hard to get. Indian books are not easy to secure and the prices of paper, pencil and every other article of stationery have gone up. The lot of the teachers can better be imagined. Some of them have left these temples of learning and joined various military departments and their allied offices. War has caused a great havoc in our educational system.

This war has killed the cultural life of the country. The fine arts lie uncared for and undeveloped. In the droning of the planes, the music of India is not heard. In the smoke of the bombs, the paintings of India are not seen. Above all, the fire of famine burns down all that is divine in man.

But nothing, under the sun, is an unmixed curse. There are people who welcome this war for it has made them rich and happy. The war contractors, the factory and mill owners, some merchants are making good money. Not only that. The present war is an incentive to Indian industrial development and scientific progress. In her bid for self sufficiency, India has made great forward strides. It has opened new careers, new trades, new possibilities.

It has greatly pacified the discontent of the unemployed. Many boys and girls have been employed in various war and its allied services. The A. R. P., the Civic Guards, Civil Supplies departments, the military accounts office have engaged a large number of our youngmen and women.

Besides many people have joined in the forces in various capacities.

India is now the base from which the Japanese are to be driven out from the east. This has given India a unique position in this war. This is the reason why all the factories of India are humming with work. This is the reason why so many members of the allied forces are moving in our land. A large number of the Americans, the Canadians, the Australians, the Chinese, not the shoe makers of the Bowbazar Street but respectable patriots of China, are turning India into an international land. Again, finding Europe insecure to live in, many civilian Europeans are staying here. They and the members of the forces are mixing with the people and it would go a great way to foster international brotherhood. The white section of our population however is making an easy acquaintance with them and this acquaintance often ripens into love, and love into matrimonial connection. But the vast majority of the people in India is in dire distress. Bereft of land, bereft of gold, an educated middle class gentleman has to face only starvation, for the cost of living has gone up by 250 per cent.

Thus India presents a pathetic picture. It is true during a war every country suffers. But the sufferings of India are peculiar. India does not complain of black-out, is not afraid of enemy bombing. But when with sufficient money an Indian fails to get food from the market and when there is government order controlling its price, he curses his lot. Herein lies the peculiarity of the Indian problem. Herein lies the tragedy of our life.

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECTS OF WAR

War has its tangible effects on body no doubt ; the body is maimed, mangled, if it survives at all the ordeal of war. Many soldiers and civilians, wearing marks of war on their person, are seen moving on the crutches. But while the body bears the main brunt of the battle, the mind also is a target of war and sustains severe onslaughts. Indeed, in a modern scientific war, a great value is attached to the psychological aspect of it. The pamphlets inciting the people to rise against the rulers, fanning flames of passion, sowing seeds of discord are poured down from the planes to paralyse the people before the tender touch of the sweet bombs. The reason is not far to seek. It is true, if the body is gone, the mind is gone. If however the mind is conquered, the body still remains. But a body without the mind cannot resist an enemy, nay it acts as an agent of him. If *moral* is shaken and the mind is conquered, the physical conquest of a country is easy.

The greatest mental effect of war is a complete change in the outlook of man. A new angle of vision bursts open to us. A man wakes up, as it were, from a dream-world, with his eyes disillusioned. Old things are valued again on a new test, measured again on a new scales, judged again on a new point of view. A complete revolution takes place in the thought-world. The prevailing sense of security is disturbed. The sacred value of life and property is lost. We live in the present. The future is precarious. The miser squanders away money. The rich tremble in fear for the apprehended loss of wealth and property. The poor seek an opportunity to be rich. The old order changeth, yielding place to new.

War once more brings home to our mind the truth that in the midst of life we are in death. We mortal men not infrequently labour under the idea that we are immortal. The prospect of the embrace of a grim death at every moment through the soft kiss of a bomb makes men shudder; the prospect of a change in the economic condition of life keeps a man in suspense.

A systematic disregard for culture and refinement follows the zeal of the war effort. All that for which man is called divine, all that for which man is called "man" are shelved in a neglected corner.

War is going on—"Eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow we die"—this is the average attitude of men. A spirit of recklessness seizes man, inspite of his cold calculation and deep contemplation. A man may turn religious when he stands face to face with death, but he turns secular when he waits for the hour of death, which may or may not materialise. No wonder then that during a war people flock even with bare cloth on and empty stomach, to the places of amusement. A desire to enjoy the life and limb of man possesses them.

Baseless rumours spring up from here, there and everywhere. Some believe in them and suffer the consequences. Rumours give birth to panic. The agents of the enemy thrive on these rumours. With the spread of panic the morale of the people is shaken. The internal law and order gives way, chaos and confusion prevails and the enemy from a distance dances in joy.

But everybody does not possess the same mind. The psychological effects vary from man to man. There are men who can remain calm and quiet even on occasions of grave peril but forget what to do. There are also men who

faint at the sound of a siren and the droning of a plane. There are again people who show cool courage and tact and handle the situation as it demands. But a large number of men rely on rumours and run helter and skelter, panic-stricken, and crowd themselves to the railway station.

In the economic field the psychological effects are remarkable. No country desires to be dependent, economically and commercially. This anxiety to be a self-contained and self-sufficient country is due to the lack of sea-bourne trade facility in a period of war. Indigenous commercial activities are therefore stimulated.

With joys of home-life shattered, sacred domestic ties are broken, and with the breaking down of home-life, moral degradation takes place.

In the realm of politics the sword rules the pen. The land, navy and air forces hold virtually the reins of the realm. The necessities of the military, the comforts of the fighters are to be attended to first of all. The sufferings of the civilians may be tolerated but those of the military must be removed.

In the ladder of civilization man sinks down. The brute in man dances. All that is divine in man sleeps for a while. Civilization and culture remain neglected and starve in a period of war-fever. Man in cold blood does things for which he repents later on. All the evils of the mind remaining dormant under the control of the so-called culture tear up the smoke-screen of this material civilization and expose the ugliness of the inner self. Passion rises, animosity wakes up and sallies forth social hatred and a great dance of death takes place with the voice of reason choked up.

THE RIVER PROBLEM OF BENGAL

Bengal is a land of rivers. The health, wealth and happiness of Bengal depend on her rivers. The history of the Bengalis is closely linked up with the destiny of her river system. In the past also these rivers determined her political and economic life. If we care to turn to the folk-lore of Bengal, we would find them rich with the songs of happy merchants like *Srimanta* and *Dhanapati* who moved on rivers and rivulets non-existent now. Nothing remains of the past glory of historical places like *Gour*, *Pandua*, *Saptagrama*. But most of the rivers are now dying and decaying. A large portion of these rivers has turned malarious and unfit for habitation. There is a section of the people who leaves everything to Nature and God. There is another section of the people who is of the opinion that nothing can be done in this behalf unless political power is wrested from the British Government. But man cannot remain idle on a matter which vitally concerns his welfare.

Geologists tell us that the delta of Bengal is of recent origin. In course of last 200 years catastrophic changes have taken place in the river system of Bengal. Many portions of central and northern Bengal were deprived of rivers while in others there was too much crowding of rivers as in East Bengal. So there is a cry for water in the former places. But East Bengal has turned into the playground of regular floods and there enormous quantities of water flow down to waste. The task before the scientists is to make equitable distribution of rivers.

For several centuries the *Bhairab* remained a prominent river and flowed through Murshidabad, Nadia, Jessore and

Khulna. The steady decay of this river dates from the 12th century and calls for rejuvenation. The swerving of the Ganges to the east and the consequent deterioration of the rivers flowing in the southern direction are largely responsible for the transformation of the prosperous central and western Bengal into a moribund track. The eastering of the *Teesta* has similarly affected North Bengal. The decay of the *Saraswati* and the *Bhagirathi*, with the rise of the *Padma*, sealed the fate of Central Bengal.

It cannot be denied that but for human follies, lack of planning and foresight the deterioration of the river system would not have been so rapid, so sudden, so disastrous. The construction of the railway lines is a glaring example of how faulty planning and profit seeking mentality can affect the well-being of the country. Some writers on economics point out that the river position of Bengal prior to the introduction of the railways and compare it with that of the days after the introduction of the railways and lay the blame on the faulty railway system. The railway embankments are constructed in such a way that the interests of the railway authorities are only safeguarded. This is responsible for the miserable plight of the eastern portion of the Burdwan Division.

Dr. N. K. Bose of the Punjab Irrigation Research Institute observes, "What is necessary is to examine the Bengal river system as a whole, firstly, there should be a thorough surveying and levelling for a number of years and next we should collect old hydraulic data of these rivers, if available. Meanwhile a scheme for a river training laboratory can be prepared in some of the foremost laboratories of Europe and America and a laboratory should be started near about Calcutta where water-supply can be

arranged regularly and where the required university atmosphere can be obtained."

The experts in river physics are thus talking of establishing river physics laboratory in this province to study in details the various engineering problems in connection with rivers, devise model experiments and chalk out the future course of action. Here we can find light and guidance from the examples of the European countries. Here we are to emulate Europe. Mr. S. C. Mazumdar, Chief Engineer, Irrigation department has made many wise suggestions in a series of articles in *Science and Culture*. Prof. Dr. M. N. Saha has also drawn the attention of the educated public to the river problem of Bengal.

Different portions of Bengal have their own peculiar problems. In the Burdwan Division, for example, the western track has problems peculiar and different from that of the eastern track. The peculiarity of the *Damodar*, the *Ajay* etc. is this that they swell during the monsoon and gradually dwindle and dry up in winter when water is in need for irrigation purposes. The only solution is to arrest the unfortunate wastage of monsoon water by adopting some storage scheme. The faulty railway embankments should be done away with by a slow and gradual process. There are debates and discussions, committees and conferences. The labours of the National Planning Committee have not yet been concluded.

If the problem is scientifically tackled as suggested by the experts, the horrors of floods like the *Teesta* flood of 1922, the *Brahmaputra* flood in 1931, the Midnapure flood of 1942 and the 1943 flood in Midnapore, Burdwan, Murshidabad would, if not be unknown, be substantially reduced. And the health and happiness of Bengal would return.

FLOOD

Blessed with the gifts of modern science, man is puffed up with pride. In his pride of power he proclaims, "Look here, I am the lord of land, air and water. The inexorable forces of Nature before whom my forefathers bowed in reverence are now at my beck and call." To teach perhaps the vain braggart man a lesson, natural calamities visit the earth off and on. Before the fury of a cyclone, an earthquake, a volcanic eruption, man is hopelessly helpless. All his engineering skill vanishes into air; all his scientific constructions are scattered like strewn sands. Humiliated and prostrate he prays to God to withhold her fearful face, "Nature red in tooth and claw." Religion thus comes victorious out of scientific achievements. A man may be pardoned, if he imagines flood to be a Divine weapon to punish haughty man. In the Bible we find God sent down a terrible deluge to punish and kill wicked humanity. Scientists may look down upon the idea but there it is.

Rains fall cats and dogs; showers come in torrents. The river-bed cannot contain the enormous volume of water. The waters wash away the banks, pull down the walls, pierce through the embankment and submerge the neighbouring area. The waters still pour in. Loud lamentations, wails and shrieks are heard from the villagers. Villages after villages are washed away. The houses are under water. The children, women, weak and invalid meet their watery grave. Strong men and women climb up the trees or house tops and save themselves. A vast tract of land looks like a sheet of water.

The havoc done by a flood beggars description. The corpses and carcases flow down in the same stream. The stench emitted fouls the atmosphere. Houses topple down, the granary of the house-holder is destroyed, the cattle are killed. The only conveyance available is boat. The feelings of Coleridge's Ancient Mariner when he cried out "Water, water everywhere without a drop to drink," come to every man. Homeless, shelterless they remain without food, either on house-tops or on the branches of trees not for hours, but for days together. All communications from the outside world are cut off. The Railways stop functioning, the telegraph suspends work and the only conveyance is boat.

Bengal is a land of rivers. We are accustomed to flood, if not every year but very frequently either in North Bengal or, in East Bengal or in Midnapore a flood must occur. Some lay the blame on the faulty system of Railway bridges, some on the method of irrigation and some on the construction of the railway embankments.

During the Durga Puja holidays 1942 a great flood passed over Midnapore. This flood has beaten all past records in horror and havoc. This was caused by a great tidal wave accompanied by a terrible cyclone. From the Government report we know that as many as 14,443 men and 1,88,000 cattle were killed and 1600 died in cholera which came in the wake of the flood. The horrors of the Teesta flood of 1922, the Brahmaputra flood in 1931 are painful records. A great flood swept over Burdwan, Midnapore, Murshidabad in August 1943. The Railways have suffered greatly. The people have suffered terribly.

When the news of the disaster reaches the ears of the country the benevolent institutions, social service leagues,

the Ram Krishna Mission, the Bharat Savasram Sangha etc. come forward with their band of selfless workers and render yeoman's service. We, students, move through the streets and beg door to door and send the money to the proper quarters. We seize this opportunity to render social service. Medical students run to the spot to attend the sick and suffering.

The problems which face man when the waters subside bewilder man. The tasks of establishing the people in the villages, constructing their dwelling houses, clearing the roads, and turning the fields ready for cultivation are not easy. The Government must grant liberally agricultural loans to bring back normal agricultural life.

Natural calamity is a mighty leveller. The differences in wealth, birth, religion are smoothed down. The rich landlord and the poor peasant are huddled up together on the house-top of a submerged area. The orthodox Brahmin and the neglected Sudra share food from the same dish. The Hindus and the Muslims embrace at the top of a tree. Not only that. Even the ferocious animals forego their wicked nature. It is said that poisonous snakes live peacefully with human beings on the branches of trees.

It is true human skill, human ingenuity, marvels of human science are absolutely powerless before the mere frown of angry Nature. Yet man cannot leave everything to God and sleep and snore. If God has given us natural calamities He has also given us wit and intellect to fight them and conquer them. We should therefore devise better system of irrigation, better method of railway bridges and construct better embankments.

THE INDIAN FORCES

Nothing under the sun is an unmixed evil. Even the darkest cloud has a silver lining. The present war which has brought so much misery and suffering in this country has also some bright features. Of all the blessings of the present war, the foremost is perhaps the opportunities which it offers to the Indian youth in the matter of training in army, navy and air forces. It is true that these opportunities fall far short of the national demands. The leaders demand a national militia, forces trained and engaged under their command. But it would be an act of folly on our part, if we let these opportunities slip. We should make the best out of the worst. Dr. Moonje and Mr. Savarkar ask the Indians to join in the fighting forces.

It is easy to be a clerk or an officer, even an executive officer. But it is not so easy to be a leader in the fighting forces. A leader must be a man of honour and integrity, one with personal courage, physical fitness and a high sense of responsibility. It calls for sacrifices and trials but it has a thrill, a halo of romance and a spirit of adventure. More people die in malaria than in war. So the fear of death must not deter us and damp our ardour. It is the way to glory and its path is not strewn with roses.

There are three fighting services in India, (1) The Royal Indian Navy, (2) The Indian Army and (3) The Indian Air Force. These services should stir the imagination of a youngman with a spirit of adventure. The Royal Indian Navy is moulded on the lines of the Royal Navy. A ship is a self-contained unit. It has complete co-ordination and cooperation among all branches. There are various ranks in the Navy e. g. (1) Midshipman (an

officer not holding a commission) (2) Sub-lieutenant (3) Lieutenant (4) L. Commander (5) Commander (6) Captain (7) Commodore (8) Rear-Admiral (9) Vice-Admiral (10) Admiral (11) Admiral of the Fleet. The ranks in the army are (1) Second Lieutenant (2) Lieutenant (3) Captain (4) Major (5) Lieutenant Colonel (6) Colonel (7) Brigadier (8) Major General (9) Lieutenant General (10) General (11) Field Marshal. The ranks in the air force are (1) Pilot officer (2) Flying Officer (3) Fight Lieutenant (4) Squadron Leader (5) Wing Commander (6) Group Captain (7) Air Commodore (8) Air Vice-Marshall (9) Air Marshall (10) Air Chief Marshall (11) Marshall of the Air Force.

Naval officers' training includes naval discipline, seamanship, navigation, gunnery, signals, anti-submarine and mine-sweeping. The training is carried out partly ashore and partly afloat. A fleet comprises squadrons and flotillas which again consist of battleships, Cruisers, Destroyers, Submarines, Air-craft carriers and Auxiliary vessels etc.

The Indian army consists of Indian armoured Corps, Indian artillery, Indian engineers, Indian Signal Corps, Indian Infantry, Royal Indian Army Service Corps, Indian Army Ordnance Corps and Indian Army Postal Service. Armoured Corps consists of two sections (1) Tank Regiment and (2) Car Regiment. Artillery consists of field, mountain, anti-tank, anti-aircraft, survey and coast etc. regiments. A regiment is commanded by a Lieutenant-Colonel and consists of several batteries. A battery is commanded by a Major, and consists of several troops except mountain and coast batteries. A troop consists of two sections of 2 guns and a gun is commanded by a Havildar. A gun consists of several detachments and each detachment consists, on an average, six men.

The Indian Signal Corps is responsible for all communications required by the army in India both internal and external. The basic unit of the Indian Infantry is a battalion which is commanded by a Lieutenant Colonel. The Royal Indian Army Service Corps (R. I. A. S. C.) is responsible for the operation of the supply and transport services of the army in India. The Indian Army Ordnance Corps (I. A. O. C.) is responsible for providing, stocking, inspecting and issuing everything the army needs except food, petrol etc.

But nothing is more attractive, more fascinating and more thrilling than service in the Indian Air Force. A squadron is the basis of Indian Air force. There are various types of Squadrons. (1) Fighter Reconnaissance (2) Bomber Reconnaissance (3) Fighter (4) Bomber (5) General Reconnaissance. The Air Force personnel consists of several branches *e. g.* (a) General duties (b) Equipment (c) Administration (d) Intelligence (e) Cipher.

When we move in a city a variety of uniforms and badges greet us. To most of us these are not clear. The rank of an officer is shown by the gold stripes he wears on his sleeves. Any body desirous of joining in the Indian fighting forces may apply for a commission to the District Magistrate or to the Police Commissioner as the case may be. In the forces Indian merits have been recognized. We have in the Navy, Lieutenant D. Shanker D. S. C. and in the Air Force, Wing Commander K. K. Mazumdar D. F. C. We must remember that rank and uniform do not make an officer. What is necessary is sincerity of purpose in the discharge of the onerous duties that we may be called upon to perform.

THE VALUE OF HIGHER EDUCATION

They decry higher education on the score that it is useless. Primary education or, at most, secondary education is enough to solve the bread problem of the country. Higher education soars high on the wings abstract thought and imagination. It befogs our mind with queer and unpractical ideas. It arrests the masculine vigour of a man and makes him effeminate. Its votary falters at every step, sees ghosts at every bush, argues much and debates like Hamlet "to be or not to be," and is a miserable failure in tackling a problem of life. He cannot jump into the whirlpool of life and fight the battle of bread. It turns man sceptic, luxurious, dishonest and hypocrite. For all the ills and wiles of civilization, it is responsible. It has created difficulties, manufactured problems and fanned discontent. It fills our mind with insane phraseology, and takes us round and round the wheels of philosophy.

The objections raised do not stand the test of impartial scrutiny. If education has any value, the importance of higher education can hardly be over-estimated. True, there are sheep and goats, men and angels. The lame who cannot walk must not venture to climb. The tortoise must not attempt to fly. There are people who should remain content with elementary education. But there are people who must climb higher and higher, and wrest from Nature new truths for the afflicted man. To the intellectual wrecks the door to the temple of higher education is closed, but to the intellectual giants it is wide open.

Those who wax eloquent on the importance of primary or secondary education, and yet ask for the abolition of higher education labour under an illusion. They ask for

the end but kick down the means. Men with higher education can only impart primary education.

Higher education has its own intrinsic value. There comes a time in every man's life when sick, chafed under the tyranny of fate, he seeks solace in *bells letters*. Higher education gives us peace of mind, born of knowledge. It broadens our mind, extends our outlook and enlarges our soul. Narrowness of the proverbial frog in the pond vanishes into air.

Higher education is the open *Sesame* which lets us into the mystery of the universe. Let us imagine the day when Adam delved and Eve span, and look at the world around us. The difference is due to the result of higher education. The phenomenal progress of science, and the advancement of arts have been possible only for it.

Yes, higher education has created discontent. But out of discontent springs every great invention. Higher education is the Aladdin's lamp. By its magic wand, it has turned deserts into gardens of Eden, annihilated time and space, restored eyes to the blind, and hearing to the deaf. Had there been no higher education, man would have been not the master, but the slave of the forces of Nature.

The ills of civilization are not the offspring of higher education. They are there for its want. And the remedy is not its abolition, but its spread. The system may be defective here and there, but that is no reason why higher education should be denounced wholesale.

The pen, they say, is mightier than the sword. And it is not the good gentleman well-versed in the three R's who can wield that tiny weapon swaying the feeling of man by his writings. In every age and in every country history bears testimony to the contribution of the educated men.

Their greatest achievements are civilization and culture. Man is born an animal and it is his culture which makes him a man. It is higher education which makes culture possible.

If civilization has advanced, it is for higher education, and without it, the onward march of civilization would be arrested. Crafty men, the intellectual lepers may condemn it, for, to them the grapes are sour. The average men admire it, for from it flows the good of the country. The wise men adore it, for it is the panacea for many an ill to which the flesh is heir to.

CINEMA AND ITS INFLUENCE ON OUR DAILY LIFE

At the crossing of two main streets of a town sat a mendicant, surrounded by his few followers and not a few sight-seers. An inquisitive truth-seeker enquired of the Sadhu, "Where lies Heaven?" The saint looked up and down, and then with a wise nod and a reflective mood, pointed out a cinema house where the people so crowded its gates that the street traffic was suspended. So popular is the cinema. It is the child's lozenge and play ground, young men and women's pleasure-garden, married couple's amusement, and the old man's Benares or Mecca. It is a tonic to the diseased, an elixir of life to the dying.

Amusing pictures greet our eyes, if we cast a glance at the neighbourhood of the fourth class booking window of a cinema house. There are youngmen with breeches rolled up, waiting, sweating and panting with money in their hand to buy tickets. There are persons dressed like gladiators

dangling from the pillars or posts. There are others, enterprising youngmen, often go by the name of "goonda" scaling the shoulders of the people below.

The cinematograph is an instrument which produces pictures of motion by the rapid projection on a screen of a great number of photographs taken successfully on a long film. The talkie is a cinematograph and gramophone combined together. It gives us the moving and talking pictures of men and women. We see the motion and hear the voice of the actors and actresses. In a theatre, however, we have all the players in flesh and blood.

A troupe of actors and actresses play in studios and when required, they go out in hills and dales, seas and deserts and are "shot at," that is, their moving pictures under suitable backgrounds are taken. Nature in her smiling or angry mood is captured in the camera. The actors and actresses in their best playing mood are caught in the apparatus. In a talkie, we find before our eyes scenes to enjoy, sights to gladden hearts and facts which make us smile or shed tears or plunge in thoughts.

The cinema is both amusing and instructive and, permit me to add, often wicked too. The stern reality of life oppresses us, the monotony dulls our senses, the cares and worries, the tears and torture depress our heart and sicken our soul. We seek in vain relief hither and thither. The talkie now comes to the weeping man to calm his aching heart, to soothe his sorrow-stricken soul. It gives us inspiration, solace in our sorrow, comfort in our weakness and light in our darkness.

There are moralists who sneer at the very name of the talkie. To them it is the storehouse of poison and corruption. To witness a picture is equal to suffer moral degrada-

tion. It fouls the social atmosphere, saps the moral vitality of the people, turning men into moral lepers.

There are talkies which teach better than a scholar, more than a book. Talkies have their educative and edifying value. There are pictures to teach, to inspire, to fire our fallen energy, and enkindle our drooping spirit. Pictures like *All Quiet on the Western Front*, *A Tale of Two Cities*, *The Life of Emile Zola*, the *Adventures of Marco Polo*, *Good Earth*, *Fantasia* and *How Green Was My Valley* and *Mission to Moscow* teach many a lesson of history and life.

There are again pictures which pander to the depraved taste of the vulgar people. To maintain the purity of pictures Government has a censor board which does not pass obscene or otherwise undesirable pictures. Yet really good pictures are few and far between. There are pictures dealing with sensational stories, love intrigues which the young should shun, and the old should discourage, for they scatter seeds of poison. Again too much of everything is bad. It is one thing to witness a good picture, sick of the monotony of the week's work. It is quite another thing to devour the film advertisement page of the newspaper in morning, with a cup of tea in the hand, and steal away, in the evening, to storm the crowded gates of the talkie. This is what is known as movi-craze.

In producing a picture the main consideration which guides some of the authorities in India is its box-office value. The lure of lucre is too much for them. They are prepared to bid good-bye to art which alone they profess to serve; they are ready to sacrifice social health which is their proclaimed concern; they are willing to forget the cannons of decency and decorum for which they stand. They hire critics, and purchase their "golden opinions"

and newspapers are full of pæans of their praise. These pictures are marketed through scientific method of advertisement. By a curious mixture of logic and magic, coloured with a dose of pseudo-art criticism, the critics guide the cinema goers. Mr. P. Barua has raised his voice of protest against these pictures.

Recently Indian talkies have made great progress. In the talkies' world the Bombay pictures have earned a good name. By the side of the Hindi pictures, the Bengali talkies cut a sorry figure. There are a few good Bengali pictures no doubt, but the average Bengali picture does not stand comparison with the average Hindi picture. Yet Bengali artists are often responsible for the Bombay production. A prophet is not honoured in his own country !

The influence of cinema on our daily life can hardly be exaggerated. At the corners of the streets, in the barred door of a house, the cinema songs are the songs of the children and people. In our talks, cinema dialogue is echoed. In our gaits, the movements of the cinema stars are aped. Above all, the influence is most perceptible in our dress and costumes. We have Douglas moustache, Barua shirt, Kananbala blouse. The cinema stars set new and novel fashions in motion. The talkie moulds public opinion. It is a mirror in which is reflected the health of the society. It points out the faults of the people and invites the reformers to remedy the defects.

Let the talkie grow and develop in proper lines, and let it continue to cheer up the crest-fallen, to inspire the drooping, to give solace to the weeping, and joy to the care-worn day-labourer. Not only that. Let it play its glorious role in building up the dying and decaying national forces.

ACHARYA SIR P. C. RAY

Great as a scientist, educationist, industrialist, patriot, social reformer and champion of the suppressed and oppressed Acharya Sir Prafulla Chandra Ray was one of the noblest specimens of humanity. He belonged to the class of great path-finders in our national life and for more than half a century the dynamic personality of this frail, little man exercised a profound influence in shaping the life of the nation in diverse ways. Though the test-tube was his "first-love", he never lived in his laboratory in splendid isolation. His dynamic personality found expression in manifold activities in diverse spheres—educational uplift, social reform, industrial regeneration and economic advancement of the toiling millions of India. Unbounded were the charities of this saint and savant of science who gave away all he earned for scientific and educational advancement and other benevolent causes.

Second son of Mr. Harish Chandra Ray, a pioneer of the educational movement in his district, he was born on August 2, 1861 at Raruli, Khulna. He received his early education in his father's village school. But as he was a precocious boy, he felt class-work too limited and longed for freedom from the narrow limits of the school room. He was a voracious reader and there was no subject in which he did not find himself interested—history, geography, languages including Sanskrit, Latin and French, arboriculture, natural history, mathematics and science.

In 1879 he passed the Entrance examination and joined the Metropolitan Institution. He was successful in winning the Gilchrist scholarship. He went to Edinburgh in 1882 and joined the university B. Sc. class. Later, he obtained

from the university the D. Sc. degree in Inorganic Chemistry. Returning to India after six years, he joined the Presidency College Calcutta. While engaged in his research, he began to think how best he could divert the huge intellectual and physical energy of the country's youth to fruitful channels : what he could do to turn a race of lawyers and clerks into a race of scientists and industrialists. He thought this problem could be partly solved by harnessing science to industries. This led him to establish Bengal Chemical and Pharmaceutical Works. He was also intimately connected with several other business enterprises including pottery works, a navigation company, and some cotton mills. Discovery of Mercurous Nitrite in the Presidency College laboratory brought him world-wide renown and his other original researches in chemistry ensured for him a high place among the chemists of the world. His great book "The History of Hindu Chemistry" opened out before the world the cultural heritage of India.

For more than two decades he was instrumental in founding a school of Chemistry and giving a tremendous push to scientific research in India. His laboratory was the nursery of scientists of New India and he trained up a band of young chemists, many of whom later achieved world-wide renown. A life-long bachelor, he looked upon his students as children. Among his famous students are Dr. M. N. Saha, Prof. Satyen Bose, and Sir J. C. Ghosh. After 35 years' association with and about 30 years' service at the Presidency College, he retired in 1916. He then joined the University College of Science as Palit Professor of Chemistry and retired from that office in 1937. During the last ten years of his service at the University College he took no salary.

Acharya Ray visited Europe for the second time in 1904 and worked in the famous Davy-Faraday Research Laboratory, London. He visited Europe for the fourth time in 1920 and again in 1926 as a delegate to the 3rd Session of the Congress of the Universities of the Empire held at Cambridge. He was a Fellow of the Chemical Society, London and of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal. Acharya Ray presided over the chemistry section of the Indian Science Congress in 1915 and again in 1921. He was made a C. I. E. in 1912 and Knighted in 1918.

He was attracted to Mahatma Gandhi in 1901 and his esteem for and intimacy with him have grown in intensity as the years rolled on. From the age of 60, specially during 1921-26 he toured throughout India, opening exhibitions and national institutions, preaching the gospel of swadeshi, charka and khaddar and urging the removal of untouchability.

His philanthropy is proverbial. Wherever there was human suffering he was out to help. In 1921 he took a leading part in organizing relief work. His personality carried everything before him, commanding, as it did, the implicit confidence of his countrymen. During the North Bengal flood of 1922, and of 1931 he again organized relief. His call for help could not go unheeded, such was the magic of his personality. Gokhale aptly described him as a "scientific recluse". The ancient saying "Plain living and high thinking" was illustrated in his life and works. He was a model of humility in greatness.

A man of simple habits, ever accessible to all, a never-failing friend of students to whom his heart and purse were equally and always open, a scholar without the pedantry of a pundit, a man of science with a passion for literature,

history, economics and politics, such was Acharya Ray. His childlike simplicity was a thing of beauty and a joy for ever. His writings and lectures exhorting the people to take to business will always inspire the educated young. During the height of Non-co-operation movement he declared ; "Science can afford to wait, but Swaraj cannot".

The poverty of the masses agonized him. The miseries of the people tortured him. The subjugation of the country distressed him beyond measure. A man of boundless charities, his was a life dedicated to the service of Mother land. Says he, "When I have served my time, I shall still want to live again and again in the lives of those who will carry on the struggle from generation to generation until the four-fold curse of tyranny, injustice, poverty and ignorance is lifted from the brow of my beloved, long suffering Motherland". This friend, philosopher and guide of the nation closed his eyes in eternal sleep on the 16th June, 1944.

IS SCIENCE A BLESSING, OR A CURSE ?

One fine morning ignorant man woke up from his slumber and found, to his astonishment, that the world of Adam and Eve had been changed by a few magicians. These magicians were votaries of science. Thanks to science, man no longer is the helpless toy of the forces of Nature, but the proud lord of three worlds of land, air and water. Science has changed our outlook, our mental make-up, our thoughts and ideas, and our dreams and imagination. We live, move and have our being in an age of

science. There is no corner of a man's life where it has not its sway.

Science has scanned the sky, measured the ocean, flown over the Himalayas and wrested from Nature all her hidden treasures. It has restored eyes to the blind, hearing to the deaf, legs to the lame nay, even life to the dead, so to say. It is by science that a train runs, an aeroplane flies, and a wireless machine operates. It has brought comfort and safety to the weeping man. It has found out the ways to health. It has increased the joys of life by leaps and bounds. It has linked up the distant parts of the globe. There is a famine in China and the people of Peru help the famine-stricken. Science has given food to the hungry, clothes to the naked, joy to the suffering, and comfort to the rich. Indeed when we think of the triumphs of science we gape in wonder. We deify science and defy formidable Nature and her mighty obstacles before which our forefathers bowed reverentially. To her devotees like Archimedes, Newton, Faraday, Sir J. C. Bose she has revealed the elixir of life, new truths for the benefit of man which have changed the face of the earth. Science is the Aladdin's lamp which performs impossible feats over-night.

Blessings of science are not confined to our body alone. Our mind enjoys them as well. Printing has cheapened knowledge and has brought to the door of a humble cottage treasures which would have been even beyond the reach of the rich. Before the almighty science, therefore, we bow down our head in awe and reverence.

If science is a blessing, it is not an unmixed blessing. It is at the root of modern warfare. In modern warfare men are merely the tools to carry out scientific inventions. In the laboratories of different nations, the scientists are

engaged in vying with one another for the production of w and novel weapons of death and destruction. And the question has been raised, if science is man's bane or boon. If science meant for man's happiness and joy, is used by man for his own death who can help him? It is certainly no fault of science, if we go on multiplying engines of destruction. Again, if science has invented ingenious methods of death, she has also invented ways of life. Against gas there is gas-mask, against tank anti-tank gun, against U-boat depth charge, against mine minesweeper and so on. It is not science which is responsible for war, it is the beast in man. If science has increased the horrors of war, she has also invented ways for the safety of man. Alfred Noble invented dynamite to help work in mines and to construct roads in hilly countries and not to blow men and their property. In holding science guilty for the cruel character of a modern war, we thus commit a blunder.

"Vain is your science"—is not the feeble cry of a few poets and visionaries. There are thinkers respected by all, who do not join in the pæan of praise showered on science. They say that science is the root cause of all the ailments of the world. It has made life complex and crooked, and it has manufactured artificial wants and turned man sceptic. It has created problems unknown and unheard of before, problems which defy the ingenuity of man to solve. It is responsible for all the ills of industrialism, for the conflict between labour and capital, for the existence of slums and for the overworked, half-fed and half-taught millions of workers. They support the pure and simple life of pre-science days. They raise the slogan, "Back to Nature".

If science has given life to the dead, it has invented new and novel weapons of death. It has multiplied the terrors

of existence and the horrors of war. If it has made life comfortable, it has also increased its woes and sufferings. In modern warfare science plays an important but a very ugly part. But it is not the fault of science.

But the call to go back to primitive life is the sigh of a chained man within the walls of a prison house. It rises to die again. From the cradle to the grave, science controls our life. We sleep on the lap of science. We leave our bed and see all around us the glories of science. Science is the breath of our nostril, the blood of our veins. It is not possible for a fish to deny the existence of water, nor for a man to-day to challenge the supremacy of science. It is all very well for a poet to resolve to fly away from science and civilization, but it is a flight of imagination conceived in a moment of disgust. Science is the healing balm of the ailing people of the aching earth. Its value can hardly be assessed. It is a priceless jewel in the march of man towards his self-realization, towards his full development.

YOUR IDEA OF A UNIVERSITY

Idea varies from man to man. No wonder then that the idea of a university also will vary from man to man. Cardinal Newmann had his "Idea of a University." Sir Ashutosh has given us his conception of a university in his numerous convocation addresses. Sir Brojen Seal, Sir P. C. Roy and Dr. Tagore have also given their pictures of a university, each in his own way.

The university is the temple of learning, the sacred seat of education. The word 'education' comes out of "e"—out,

“ducere”—to lead, and it means development of our dormant faculties, both physical and mental. Education is the flowering of the mind, the building of the young brain. The university should, therefore, so design its syllabus that a man may emerge out of its portals a full-fledged man. It should equip him with all the necessary weapons to fight the battle of life. It must aim at the fulfilment of *mens sana in corpore sano* (a sound mind in a sound body).

The university worships the truth, the truth alone and nothing but the truth. The university is the torch-bearer of knowledge and it dispels the darkness of ignorance. It illumines the dark, raises the low, inspires the lazy, fires the old, and galvanizes the crest-fallen. It manufactures men, who not only breathe but who are determined “to strive, to seek, to find and not to yield”—men who can keep their heads cool, minds unperturbed even in trying circumstances, men who can initiate new ideas and ideals into the world, men who can wrest from Nature new truths of science, men who can take courage in both hands and say “Yes”, when all the world say, “No”. The university makes ideal men whom difficulty cannot crush, danger cannot frighten, and “chill penury” cannot “freeze the genial current of the soul”—men who will never suffer the ship-wreck in the voyage of their life.

The term “education” we speak glibly, says Dr. Tagore, “connotes mere collection of provision in the pantry ; it stops short there, for the courtyard remains bare. The foreign system of education is like the lamp in the compartment of a railway train. The room is brilliantly lit, but thousands of miles traversed by the train remain shrouded in the darkness as before, as if the line of carriage manu-

factured in the workshop is the only reality, while the country-side is a mere illusion."

India is an agricultural country. The university should provide for its improvement. India is a supplier of raw materials to the world. She lags far behind the other nations of the world in manufacturing articles. There must be an adequate provision for it. There should be researches as to how best the rich mineral resources of India might be utilized. The university must take stock of the stern realities of life, and remedy the defects of the prevalent system of education. The university should fight the unemployment problem. Shakespeare and Milton, Kant and Hegel, Cæsar and Napoleon do not feed our belly. There cannot be any fasting in the mind, and feasting in the belly.

The university teaches science no doubt, but our scientists can hardly apply their book-knowledge to nation-building activities. The university should liberally encourage researches in the practical application of science. The university should arrange for training in modern warfare. Aeronautics has not so far been found a place in the curriculum of studies and this must be introduced in the university. There must not be any narrowness near about the temple of learning. Let every door of knowledge be thrown open to all, irrespective of caste, creed, colour or sex. An ideal university must impart national education which, as Dr. Radha Kumud Mukherji points out, "should minister to the moral and material needs of the nation in consonance with its indigenous ideals and traditions. National education must be rooted in the heritage of the past."

It is true that the education imparted in schools and colleges is no longer confined to memory work, pure and

simple. It has travelled beyond the four corners of the teaching room. There are educational excursions, picnics conducted by educational authorities, the museum, the seminar, the laboratory. They supplement the otherwise incomplete curriculum of the university studies. The debating club, the literary societies, the magazine supply intellectual flavour to the otherwise dull syllabus of the university and strengthen the mind. The various out-door games, the boy-scout, the bratachari, the University Training Corps help to build up the physique, and infuse a sort of discipline so necessary in the world. To these may be added the benefit derived from the personal contact with the teachers. This helps to mould the character, and serves the purpose of moral and intellectual stimulus. The influence of the teachers prevents the students from becoming intellectual Dreadnaughts which cannot get out of the dock, men who have eaten the lotus and forgot to return home. Lord Bryce has said that the end of education is not to possess knowledge as a man possesses coins in his purse, but to make knowledge a part and parcel of ourselves. If that be so, then the various factors enumerated above should be introduced in an ideal university to make up the deficiencies of the present system of education.

The ills of the modern world are due to the present godless civilization. The university should, therefore, provide for moral and religious training. The State must liberally unloose the strings of its purse to maintain such a university, for it is for the ultimate welfare of the State that the university exists.

EVACUATION AND VILLAGE RE-CONSTRUCTION

Like the sword of Damocles, the terror of aerial bombing hangs over our head. We know not when, how and where the enemy plane will throw down bombs and would do mischief. With a view to reduce the loss of life and property due to bombing, evacuation or mass removal of population from places likely to be bombed has been planned. The people within the enemy's bombing range, the people living close to docks, harbours, aerodromes and places of military importance are asked to leave their home and are directed to live in safe zones. These people are paid some amount of compensation towards costs of their removal and establishment at distant places. It may be that the amount is not sufficient. It may be there are difficulties to settle elsewhere. It may be a case of very hardship, sacrifice and dislocation. But necessity knows no law; a war knows no hardship, respects no feelings, permits no consideration. No sacrifice is too great to win the war. The people must choose either to stay on and run the risk of being bombed by the enemy and defy the order of Government or to live with difficulty at somewhere else and save themselves.

It is true husbands have been parted from wives, children from parents. Domestic privacy is invaded. Citizens flee for safety to distant villages, villages once left deserted and despised. Governments move to the interior, business houses to the outskirts of the towns. From social point of view, evacuation results in the destruction of home life. From commercial point of view, it leads to an exodus of banks, insurance offices. The evacuees are to meet the abnormal rise in rent in areas flooded by the citizens and

suffer the discomfort of inadequacy of water, sanitary and medical facilities. And this continues so long the threat of aerial bombardment lasts.

In order to tackle this new problem local authorities, Insurance companies and Co-operative societies should be induced to invest a part of their capital to construct semi-permanent structures. In peace time these dwelling houses may be utilized for the town holiday makers and these may turn into peace-time holiday resorts, residential estates, educational centres, sanatoria etc. The dispersal of India's urban population over the land thus secured should maintain the correct balance of rural and urban interests.

Even the darkest cloud has a silver lining. The desire to live in villages where there are no railways, no motors, no electricity and no good road has raised the hopes of those who stand for the betterment of our villages. The evacuees would, for their safety, cut the jungles, excavate the tanks, make the roads and move in places where foxes and jackals roamed during day time. Behind the back of these men would follow shopkeepers, educational institutions etc. And instead of the songs of the mosquitoes and gnats, the boys will sing and dance. But what is good is this that the people accustomed to urban life may yield to the fascination of rural Bengal of which poets sing. This is conducive to social health. We belong to an educational system which thinks only in urban terms and regards the urban calling as the natural goal of the bright boys of the school. Village betterment is possible only, if enterprise and resources are directed from urban to rural areas and if enlightened interest in rural welfare is taken by the Government. Evacuation schemes should be joined and dovetailed with rural reconstruction plan. War has given

us a golden opportunity which, if be successfully tackled, may brighten our dark villages.

If evacuation gives us a chance to better our villages, it equally presents an opportunity to beautify our congested and over-crowded towns. It is easy to develop garden cities, free from dust, noise and smoke, if the village around the towns are simple, sanitary, and self-supporting. We should therefore take full advantage of the present emergency and try to bring about a regeneration of rural India. In order to arrest the progressive deterioration of the economic condition of the agriculturists of Bengal the mere cry, "Go Back to Village" will not do. We do not know when and how the labours of the National Planning Committee will be concluded. We do not know when the Indians will be given a free hand to develop our neglected rural economy. We do not know when the authorities will realize the importance of village reconstruction and will make necessary grants from the public purse. We do not know when our educated people will cease to see the villages with eyes of contempt and ridicule. But let us not roam in the wilderness of uncertainties. Let us make the best of the present dark and dismal situation and let the different societies come forward with schemes for solution of the evacuation problem. And out of the ashes of this all destroying war will emerge a new village, a new town and a new life.

EDUCATIONAL VALUE OF TRAVELLING

We travel for business ; we travel for sight-seeing ; we travel for necessity. We go to Darjeeling to see a relative or to look at the mighty *Himalayas*. We go to Puri to enjoy a sea-bath, to see the sun sinking in and emerging out of the sea. But who travels to learn ? Who visits foreign countries to acquire knowledge ? But that is not the case in Europe. Travelling there is a necessary part of education. There travelling completes education. A man with high sounding university diplomas, but with no travelling experience is looked down upon. A travelled man is preferred to an ordinary educated man.

The educational value of travelling can hardly be overestimated. Bacon says that travelling in the younger sort is a part of education, in the elder a part of experience. Travelling teaches and teaches better than the books. No sense-organ is more potent a factor in teaching than the eye. We hear, and yet doubt. We read, and yet question and challenge. We rub our eyes and shrug our shoulders. But if we go to the spot direct, all doubts are set at rest. We read of the existence, in the past, of a university named Nalanda. They say there were one hundred lecture rooms. Is it a figment of imagination ? Is it a fanciful research of a day-dreamer ? We run to the spot. We see and examine the work of excavation. Our doubts are dispelled. Our book knowledge is confirmed.

Life is real, life is practical, but much of what a man learns from books is theoretical. Book-knowledge unless modified in the light of practical experience is not a help, but often a hindrance. Travelling furnishes an occasion for that, and helps to equip man with proper arms to fight the

battle of life. Pope, the poet sings that proper study of mankind is man, and the traveller comes into contact with various kinds of men, and thus acquires better knowledge of man and his mind.

Travelling refines our knowledge gained from books. Ideas strike root in the heart. The mental horizon is broadened. It makes us liberal in thought. It expands our outlook. We cease to measure things in terms of our environment. We can take a broad view of things, independent of the place where we are. Narrowness of the proverbial frog in the pond vanishes into air.

History, Geography, Economics and Sociology are best taught not from any book only, not merely from the lips of a university professor but from extensive travelling. Travelling supplements our book knowledge. The places like Kurukshetra, Thermopæyle, Marathon, Waterloo and Plassey call back to our mind glorious facts of history. A visit to the historical places is interesting, instructive and edifying. It illumines many a dark chapter of history.

Travelling deepens our sympathy. The man confined to his own cage imagines himself very great. He is a frog in the pond, and takes the pond to be as big as the ocean. The real nature of our manners and customs is revealed when they are compared with those of other countries. Travelling helps us to kill superstitious ideas.

The more we are away from our home, the larger our heart becomes, and the more generous we turn. A Bengali hates a Bengali in Bengal, but they are friends out of Bengal. Indians fight the Indians in India, but under a foreign sun they embrace as friends.

Travelling teaches us trade and commerce. A visit to the commercial centres of the world teaches more of com-

merce than the books of a commercial library. It quickens trade and facilitates commerce. This is why a Thomas Bata purchases æoplanes to tour the world for business, and becomes a shoe king.^o

Travelling teaches the etiquette of a country. Indeed no book can teach it better. The easiest method of learning a language is travelling the country where it is spoken. There we have to speak it, on pain of being misunderstood. We hear it from the best speaker of the language. There we have no fear, no shame, and none to observe us, if we cut a sorry figure, in our linguistic performance, whatever be it. We are to make there a life and death struggle to speak the foreign language and save ourselves from becoming a laughing stock.

True, travelling means expense, and we, Indians, are poor. Indian students can ill afford money to travel. Having regard to the educational value of it, the colleges, and the University should arrange with the Railway companies educational excursion parties at cheap rates.

Again, the grandeur and varied beauty of Nature leave on the traveller an ennobling effect. When a man is at the top of a mountain, he realizes the littleness of his own self and he feels the pettiness of human quarrels and conflicts, and a sense sublime raises him to a higher moral plane. And the devil in man dies.

Educational value of travelling is immense. But we must have the mind to learn when we travel. For—

‘Some minds improve by travel, other rather
Resemble copper wire or brass,

Which gets the narrower by going further.”

WOMAN AND EMPLOYMENT

Leaving aside age-long custom and convention, keeping aside her hearth and home, disregarding the frowns of the angry old and taking advantage of the tolerant middle aged where available, and if not, defying them, a woman, not a girl in her teens, but an elderly woman rushes to the gate of a school or a college. If circumstances do not permit, she arranges for her own education and sits at the University examination as a private student. Why? To the rich lady, education may be something like an article of luxury. But, to an average middle class woman, it is a necessity for her future livelihood, a weapon to fight her own battle of life, should such an occasion arise, a safeguard against future contingencies, a measure for her independent economic existence.

She realises that she is the burden of her parents when young, and when grown-up, the burden is shifted, on payment of a princely allowance, to a gentleman often unknown or if known, he manages to conceal his real self for some time until he wins her and when old, she is still the burden of her own dear son or, to be precise, of her son's wife. It is to put a stop to this gloomy future that she seeks education, and education for employment. It is to relieve the economic burden of her family and it is with a desire to stand on her own legs that she is anxious for her education. She may tell a person that it is not any economic want, present, or future that urges her to come to the college, but it is simply her love for knowledge for its own sake, a thirst after culture, pure and simple.

So there has grown among middle class women a desire, an ardent desire, a craze, call it "insane craze," if you

like it, win a university hall-mark. And year after year, they come out of the university portals in flying colours. But the market is a market, not ruled by any sense of chivalry, nor by any respect for women graduates for their sex, but by the cruel law of demand and supply. The supply of the lady graduates is much while the demand is small, and hence the poor pay of the employed few and a large number of the unemployed. And in the home, the educated girls are worshipped by a few as angels, looked down upon by many as toys, or objects of luxury. An educated woman often finds no employment in the world, and no footing in her own home.

For solution of the employment problem of an educated woman, the scope of her education should be widened. All doors to the temple of learning should be opened to her. Some girls read medicine, few law and none engineering. There is an idea that some occupations are masculine, and some feminine and the women are not fit for masculine occupations. A woman with primary or secondary education is made either for her occupation as a nurse or a teacher, and a woman with better education is made only for the post of a teacher. No other occupation is thought fit for a woman. This is often responsible for unemployment among the educated women.

The professions hitherto monopolized by menfolk should be invaded by women as well. There should be an increasing number of women among members of medical profession. An educated woman can work as an insurance agent among womenfolk. There should be an increasing number of women lawyers to take up cases particularly where widows and infants are concerned. Instead of crowding the overcrowded teaching profession, women

who are seekers of employment should be given technical education. Women can easily turn typists and stenographers. They should make a monopoly of all posts of clerkship in an institution meant exclusively for the females. Shops dealing exclusively with a lady's requirements may be started, and the staff may be exclusively of the fair sex. Only by doing so can they be employed in a large number.

There are men among women and women among men. A man's mind, temperament and tendency are not always determined by his sex. There may be women who may prove better clerks, better lawyers better engineers, and better physicians. Mrs. Kamala Devi, on her return from the world tour, said that nearly half of the press reporters present at the crowded meetings she addressed were women, even in cities like Chungking. She wonders why Indian women do not take to journalism.

It is true, if women invade men's sphere, that is, if they accept occupations hitherto monopolized by menfolk the competition in the already crowded world of employment would be keener. And in that competition the fittest only will survive, woman or man or both.

PEACE HATH HER VICTORIES NO LESS RENOWNED THAN WAR

The victories of war dazzle our eyes. There seems nothing so glorious as these. We forget that there are victories which can be won in peaceful time, and these are equally great. Yes, there are bloodshed, loss of lives, ruin of countries, yet we acclaim a Waterloo, and honour

a Duke of Wellington. During peace time also there are victories not in the fields of war, but in the fields of arts, literature, trade, and commerce which raise a country in the ladder of civilization, and which make the world worth living. If we judge dispassionately we will find that these latter victories are as glorious as, nay, more glorious than those of war.

The poets sing, the patriots glorify the achievements at a Marathon, a Thermopylæ, a Waterloo, a Trafalgar, a Haldighat and a Plassey. They may enrich one country at the cost of another. They may decide the fate of a country in the history of the world. When a Roman general returned home victorious, the Romans gave him a triumph. When the Duke of Wellington came from the field of Waterloo, England gave him an ovation, the like of which history has seldom seen. These victories augment material possessions of a country, exhibit national honour, heighten national glory.

During peace time, there are also victories in the fields of arts, literature, trade and commerce. These fields remain barren and uncultivated in a period of war. A period of war is a period of unrest, confusion and chaos. There is none then in the country who can pursue his vocation peacefully. War hits the philosopher in his closet, the poet in his arm-chair, the merchantmen in their business. When the sky is rent with the war-cry, the scientist cannot calmly continue his researches except those necessary for war. When planes bomb a country, a Shakespeare cannot produce dramas like Hamlet, or Macbeth, or a Milton cannot justify the ways of God in "Paradise Lost." When the whole nation takes up arms, the poet, the painter, the sculptor and the musician take to the sword, rather the bomb.

The achievements in the realms of arts and culture, trade and commerce are made in the peace time. We owe Shakespeare's dramas to the peaceful reign of Elizabeth. We owe Milton's epics to the peaceful time of the Restoration. Such is the case with every great discovery in the field of science except war weapons. Abolition of slave trade was not possible, when Napoleon swept over France like a meteor. It is not without reason that science made gigantic strides after the downfall of Napoleon.

The progress of man from barbarism to civilization is a record of achievements during peace time. Art, architecture, sculpture, painting, music and literature owe their birth, growth and nourishment during peace. Peace feeds, nurses and nourishes all those institutions of man which have distinguished man from the rest of the creation. War puts back the hands of the clock of civilization. Victories of war are really joys over death and destruction. From the points of view of mankind, victories of war are really never glorious. A country may be conquered, it may be glorious for the conqueror, it is a sea of suffering for the conquered, and for mankind it is a loss, an act of shame, if we may say so.

When peace reigns supreme, man turns his mind towards his own self, towards his neighbours, towards his God. He sits down coolly, fathoms his mind, scans his actions, and makes offerings at the altar of God. He lets Fancy roam, and with her aid, spins many a story to amuse and to instruct man. In peace time are reaped the fruits of sober human mind. And what are better and more glorious more renowned than these?

Thus Waterloo, Trafalgar, Plassey are victories of war and the works of Shakespeare, Milton, the discovery of

steam engine, the abolition of slave trade are victories at peace time. Now, if Waterloo is glorious is Shakespeare not so? If the former has made England renowned, the latter has made her not less so. If the former has increased the material possessions of England, and has raised her position in the military world, the latter has made her name honoured throughout the length and breadth of the globe. Again, the discoveries of science which are victories of peace time have minimised man's miseries, and have made life worth living. If the former be brilliant, the latter are beneficial.

Asoka is great not for his victory at Kalinga, but for his victory during peace time, the propagation of Buddhism. The former is a glory of a particular country, and often for a particular age, the latter is a glory for humanity at large, and for all time to come. Thus we see that the victories of peace are as glorious as, nay, more glorious than the victories of war.

THE FOOD PROBLEM

Under the shadow of war many dark problems have raised their heads but the problem of all problems is the food problem. All other problems—the problem of railway communication and evacuation, of clothes and medicine, nay even of war and air-raid are cast into shade. This dismal problem has darkened the desolating picture of the grim war.

But nowhere is the problem so acute as in Bengal. It sounds very strange that India, the land whence flowed

milk and honey should ever, feel the pinch of scarcity in food-grains. It is hard to believe that Bengal, the granary of India, that Bengal well-watered and ever green should be on the throes of a famine in this the 20th century. Verily, in the land of plenty people perish. There were wars before and there were famines before. But never before in the history of Bengal rice was sold at Rs. 100/- per maund. This terrible situation seems incredible when we remember that the Government of India launched in a campaign of "Grow More Food." The Government of Bengal were not idle. It discouraged cash-crop and restricted jute cultivation with a view to yield more food crop. But these measures are inadequate.

Various are the causes of this problem. Owing to the occupation of Burma, Thailand, Indo-China by the Japanese the normal supplies of rice from these places have been stopped. Rice and wheat-grains must be supplied to the soldiers fighting in the fronts. Then again large stocks of rice were exported from the very soil of Bengal and other parts of India to distant lands like Ceylon and South Africa etc. inspite of dire scarcity here. We must also admit that the harvest God is not kind this year to Bengal. To fill up the cup of misery, flood has been paying frequent visits to the country. After the devastating cyclone of 1942 in Midnapore, floods invaded the same unfortunate district and also Burdwan, Murshidabad, Birbhum etc. in 1943.

Besides the above reasons diverse other factors have aggravated the problem. The much trumpeted "Grow More Food" campaign did not produce any effective response from the tillers of the soil. The other provinces in India are also not fortunate in having surplus food-crops and they can ill afford to spare their vital needs when they

are in need of them. If food is available somewhere in India at a sky-rocketing price, the services of the railways are not easy to procure.

The food problem became so acute that in Bengal, Behar and Orissa and Madras famine-condition prevailed for the greater part of 1943. A terrible famine visited Bengal, a famine the like of which India has seldom seen. According to the Secretary of State for India one million souls perished in this fire of famine. According to non-official calculation the figure is $3\frac{1}{2}$ millions. Pandit H. N. Kunzru, Mrs. Rajan Nehru, Mrs. Vijaylakshmi Pandit made extensive tours in Bengal and gave harrowing accounts. The government of Bengal spent $11\frac{1}{2}$ crores to combat the calamity. Appeals to help Bengal had a great response from the Indian public and from the overseas.

The food problem is not peculiar to India. It is now a world-problem and the countries directly or indirectly involved in war are to face the problem. The Government of India are having meetings, resolutions and decisions and Food Conferences. With a view to regulate the supply of food-stuff to the people, the Government have opened a department with Director of Civil Supplies at its head.

At present rationing has been introduced to most of the towns and cities and industrial areas. Several rural areas are also being included in rationing scheme. Lord Wavel and his government have given particular attention to the food problem. Though there are groans of grievances yet the problem is being tackled somewhat systematically.

Government of India have appointed several Regional Commissioners for Civil supplies and they are trying to maintain equal price-level throughout India. But the best laid schemes cannot produce the maximum results unless

the authorities enjoy the whole-hearted co-operation of the public. Fear and greed are the two psychological factors which work in our midst—a genuine fear of future shortage on the part of honest men and women, who may hoard from no other motive and a cruel and unsocial cupidity of a few whose financial resources and knowledge of markets enable them to make profit out of the misfortunes of the people.

People want food but they get committees, conferences, speeches and statements. Crimes increase ; people silently die in villages. An affectionate mother sells her dear son, snatches food from her own children and fights with the dogs to find out food in dust-bins. The spring time for wishful thinking is past. The time has come when we must grapple with the icy realities and face the facts.

Enforcement of rationing, indictment of persons on charges of hoarding or profiteering, restriction of food grains passage from one locality to another are all good in their own ways. For the proper solution of the problem and to build up the solid food front in India we must look to the scientists and sociologists. Dr. D. V. Pal, the Agricultural Chemist to the C. government has outlined a long-range programme. He has advised a comprehensive scheme for irrigation, preparation of manure from farm-wastes and town refuse, cultivation of leguminous crops, improvement of ill-balanced diet of the people, supply of improved seeds to the cultivators and reservation of pastures for the cattle etc. Dr. Pal assures, "If better methods of cultivation and manuring are adopted, it is possible to increase the food production by 25 to 30 per cent.

Dr. Radha Kamal Mukherjee has gone at the very root of the problem. Dr. Mukherji holds that there is a race between population and food production and the rate of

increase of total food production in India is being increasingly outrun by the rate of population-increase. He suggests the marriage of agriculture with nutrition. Government should encourage and promote planned crop-production in adjustment to the national needs. Applied Botany and Ecology should unite together to find out a scientific diet for the Indians. The Indian diet is unbalanced, as it relies too much on one staple—rice or wheat. With a view to produce a more varied and healthier diet, new crops and root vegetables should be introduced. Apart from the reasons of war emergency such a change is necessary. Attempts should be made to educate people into new food-habits. Then and only then the food problem of India can be successfully and permanently solved.

NOVEL-READING

A novel is a work of fiction in which imagination and intellect combine to express life in the form of a story. In it is mirrored life as seen through the prism of personality of the writer.

The present age is an age of novels. Nothing is more popular than the novels. There are people who cannot sleep without a novel in their hands. There are people who cannot digest their food without reading novels. The young school student steals from the desk of his parents a novel and devours it, keeping late hours at night, and tells all the world on the morrow that he was busy in the previous night with his text books. An aged mother, in quest of a lost article, finds, among the books of her grown-

up daughter, a fascinating novel, and she stops a second, and muses a minute. She is angry, for she is of the opinion that these novels must not be read. But her face changes in no time. She takes it and shows it to her husband and they read it together in the midnight, and roll in laughter. But on the morrow, she takes gravely her daughter to task for reading novels. So popular is the novel.

There are moralists who sneer at the very name of a novel. To them, it is a red rag. To them it is a hot bed of poison. They hold the novel responsible for every evil of the country. According to them the novels eat into the vitals of the society, and reduce men to moral lepers. The fault is not with the novels but with those who read them, or better, with their method of reading. These readers imagine the stories described in the novels to be true; they fancy the wicked characters depicted in a novel to be real. Vice attracts vice and the Satan in the reader accepts as real what is purely imaginary and he tries to imitate the activities of the wicked character. Here he blunders, here he errs, here he falls into a trap from which it is hard for him to come out. This is the reason why many men do not like that youngmen should read all novels. There are many novels for the young, some novels for the middle-aged, and a few novels for the old and some novels for all.

There are also novels and novels. There are novels to teach, there are novels to inspire and there are novels to warn. There are again novels which lay bare the beast in man, the wickedness of the society and paint passion in lurid light and glorify it as realism in literature. There are again novels which are full of wild imagination, and the facts narrated in them have no roots in the solid earth. They soar in the realm of fancy, and haunt thought's

wildernesses. They delight in thrills, romance and murder.

The novel teaches us the beauty of language, the style, and the dialogue. The master-minds of the East and the West have expressed their thoughts, ideas and dreams in the novels. The novels of Tolstoy, Victor Hugo, Dickens, Thackeray, George Elliot, Hardy and Stevenson are jewels in English. The literary excellences they possess, apart from any other consideration, must invite every pilgrim of literature to these shrines of language.

The novel teaches us the ways of the world. The joys and sorrows, the conflicts of interest, the clash of power, and the trials and tribulations are held up before man like mirrors. It warns us of the pitfalls of life, and tells us how to steer clear. It enlarges our knowledge of man. It is a hand-maiden to history. The novel furnishes materials out of which, with the help of constructive imagination, history is made.

Novels are interesting. They stir up our imagination and excite our emotion. We laugh and weep with the characters of the novel. We find our own pictures portrayed there. We read and smile ; we read and shed tears and forget hunger and thirst. The novels are amusing. Funny scenes, humourous sketches supply to the tired brain and jaded body the fund of fun and the juice of life so necessary to sustain and fight the battle of life.

This fine art of fiction is also a very able and effective instrument of propaganda of any type. The novel can take up any question or problem in the world clamouring for show or solution and lend it a potent, appealing and imaginative treatment. It may be utilized for social, political, economic and religious propaganda. Dickens's

Oliver Twist throws a lurid light on the condition of Victorian slums and work-houses. Victor Hugo's *Les Misérables* paints the picture of galley slave system. Mrs. Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* gives us a picture of slavery.

These novels make propaganda better than the platform and the Radio. The novels invite the legislators to make laws, teach the police how to trace out the criminals and tell a man of the street how the aristocracy think and move, and the rich how the poor think and feel. The novels give us inspiration,—solace in sorrow, comfort in weakness, hope in despair, and light in our darkness.

PRICE CONTROL.

Price-control is the intervention of the state in the determination of prices, ordinarily by legislative acts, with a view to raise, lower, or stabilise them. The politicians and the economists fight among themselves on the question, how far the state should interfere into the free activities of the people in general and the traders in particular. There is a view that Government should follow "*laissez faire*", that is, the policy of non-intervention. But in a period of war, if economic forces are given free scope, they would play havoc on the people. This is a lesson which we practically learnt from the last Great War. In war-time therefore government control of prices of certain commodities is essential for the safety and security of the people, though it means some curtailment of certain individual freedom.

During the period of a war prices rise higher and higher till it so happens that they are beyond the reach of the

ordinary rich. This is due to various causes. In a period of war inflation of money must take place and when note-issue goes beyond certain limits, prices of articles must go up. Few countries in the world are economically self-sufficient. A manufacturing country depends for raw materials on an industrially backward country and the latter depends on the former for the supply of finished goods. The exchange of goods cannot take place when submarines, U-boats, bombers ply on the trade-lines of the world. This results in shortage of supplies. The curtailment of various transport facilities by rail, road and water raises the prices of articles within a country. In our country the lack of production, of machinery and tools, and lack of production of wagons, steamships are very potent causes for this rise.

With the declaration of war, the Government of India under the Defence of India Act have taken certain measures for the control of prices of articles in this country. Several Ordinances have been passed and several conferences have been held. The prices of articles like rice, wheat, atta, flour, sugar, kerosine, paper etc. have been fixed. But the fun of the price control in our country is this that as soon as a price is fixed for an article it disappears from the open market. Mr. J. Mehta puts it well when he says that in the battle of bread the Indian *Bania* beats the British. A man can get any quantity of any price-controlled article from the black market but very little from the open market. Neither the threat of prosecution, nor the sense of a civic responsibility induces the traders to place their goods before the public.

The open market is often closed and the black-market is fattened. This takes place not only with regard to food-

stuff but also with regard to other necessities as well. It is clear that so long as the controlling authority does not control the supply of the commodities and their distribution and is not in a position to supply in the market large quantities of articles through recognized trade agents at the controlled rates, the legal maximum fixed by the government cannot be effective. The control over supplies and distribution is therefore essential for the success of price control. Price-control before obtaining physical control over a substantial part of the food stuffs is like putting the cart before the horse. So long the government cannot guarantee sufficient supply to the people a mere fixation of a price will only increase the sufferings of the people. Had the government undertaken the task of regulating supply with demand by increasing manufactures and replacing essential foreign goods by their substitutes and by co-ordinating supply with transport facilities by rail, road and water, the abnormal rise would have been impossible.

Immediately after the declaration of war and by December 1939 the weekly index number rose to 135.9 and it went up to 155.2 by June 1943 and by November 300%. Some economists are of the opinion that the indication of prices in index number in this country is wrong as no index number for retail prices is compiled.

On the 18th October 1939 the first conference for the regulation of prices of the articles took place. It was decided that the price of the foreign goods, would be fixed by the Central government. It was further decided that the replacement cost would be the basis of prices to be fixed by the government. The second conference sat on the 24th and 25th January 1940 and the third conference on the 16th and 17th October 1941. It was at this latter

conference that the idea to manufacture standard cloth was conceived. The fourth conference which sat on the 6th and 7th February 1944 discussed the availability of railway wagons for transport of the goods. It was at the 6th conference held on 7th September 1942, that a realistic view of the problem was taken.

After four years of a total war the price of any article in England has not been allowed to go beyond 25% above the pre-war level. In Bengal however there has been 250 per cent increase in respect of necessities of life. The price control machinery is very effective in England. The reason is not far to seek. The amount of the loss which is likely to be sustained by a trader in England is contributed by the National Government of England and thus the price has been stabilized. The Chinese government has created a fund of 45 crores of Chinese dollars for price stabilization purpose. A portion of this sum is being used for purchase and redistribution of commodities essential for their requirements and a part is being utilized in granting loans to the producers of essential commodities. What has taken place in England and China may also take place in India, should the authorities so desire. This raises the question of forming a national government responsible to the people in this country.

In order to make effective the price control policy of the Government, it is necessary that there must be constant flow of supply. The articles at controlled rates must be made available to one and all. Let nobody go away disappointed from a shop where articles are sold at controlled rates. Unless there is a belief in the mind of the people that the articles would be found at controlled rates for the mere asking, it is futile to attempt to stop hoarding, speculation and profiteering. Let the price control policy of the government be directed to inspire that confidence in the mind of the people and the hard-hit people will find some solace even in their sufferings.

THE CAUSES OF THE PRESENT WAR.

[The Second Great World War]

The present has its root in the past. Nothing in the world is an isolated event. Events follow events in a chain of succession, each connecting the other by some way or other. Looked superficially from a distance, it would appear that on the rejection by the Poles of the demands of Hitler for the return of Danzig, the Germans invaded Poland on September 1, 1939 and thereupon Britain and France declared war on Germany on Sept. 3 to discharge their obligations to Poland. And the Second Great World War began. But things are not what they seem.

If we dive deep and look at the drama of history, we will find that the root cause of the present war lay hidden in the last Great War, or rather in the treaty of Versailles which concluded it. The terms of the treaty of Versailles, it is now admitted on all hands, were, in some respects, too severe. The terms were imposed and dictated by the conquerors on the conquered Germany. No notice was taken of the feelings of Germany and her future. The conquered Germany had no free voice, and she could not raise her little finger in protest. Since then Germany has been planning for a day of vengeance. The economic depression which swept over Europe at the end of 1929 affected Germany with great severity. The Germans put the whole blame on the victors of 1918.

It has been suggested that Hitlerism is a special and peculiar re-action to the harsh treatment of Germany after 1914-18 War and to the exceptional sufferings of the Germans during the economic crisis which began at the end of 1929. To Hitler the economic depression was a grand

opportunity to bring himself to the lurid light of the people. Germans accepted National Socialism (Nazism) because it offered them a simple diagnosis of their sufferings and a simple remedy. Young Germany took a vow to wreck vengeance on the victors of 1918 and, with that end in view, they determined to break to pieces the terms of the Versailles Treaty. The worship of power, contempt for mercy, the sacrifice of the individual to the state, a belief in war as the highest and most ennobling form of human activity—those were the lessons which were taught to the young Germans in Germany since the conclusion of the last Great World War. Hitler is thus a creature, not the creator of German nationalism. And his philosophy has been styled as a philosophy of darkness.

If Germany is the main author of the present titanic struggle, we must not forget her partners Italy and Japan and in order to find out the causes of the present war we should not only confine ourselves to the history of Germany after the last Great War but also turn to those of Italy and Japan.

Really speaking Japan has been fighting China and through her, Britain and America, since 1932 when she occupied Manchuria and left the League of Nations the next year. Militarist Japan realized that so long America and Britain would continue to help China she could not conquer her. When practically the whole of Europe except Russia was under Nazi-Germany, Japan jumped into the fire of war, finding the golden opportunity for her scheme of expansion in the East. In the defeat of America and Britain lies his ambition in Asia. America and Britain declared war on Japan on December 9, 1941. As for Italy, since Mussolini's coming to power and the

spread of Fascism the dictator's dream of winning back the lost glory of Rome was only partially realized with the conquest of Abyssinia. Hitler's determination to fight the victors of 1918 offered him an opportunity to translate his dream. The Rome-Berlin axis was proclaimed on November 1, 1936. But along with these econo-political reasons there are certain theories which put the fat on fire and urged the combatants to court death similingly. For ever Fascism and Bolshevism are at daggers drawn, for ever democracy and dictatorship are at war.

For a correct appreciation of the causes of the present war a study of history of Germany, Japan and Italy for the period from 1919 to 1938 is essential. Within a period of ten years (1919-1929) the wounds of Germany, sustained in the last Great War, were healed up and in about 5 years more, the Germans felt strong. The pacifist England took no notice of it. The wave of Nationalism which passed through Germany, Italy and Japan could not but lead to a war. "My country right or wrong, my nation first and foremost, war is to man what maternity is to woman"—preachings like these cannot but result in a war. The Japanese scheme of expansion as outlined in the famous *Tanaka* memorial, Hitler's dream to dominate the world as sketched in his *Mein Kampf* and Italy's ambition to win back the glory of the Roman empire are the motive powers which let loose this dance of Death. Ambition then, inordinate ambition is at the root this war, indeed at every war. There are thinkers who consider that it is for the safety and security of the democracies of the world, and for the freedom of the smaller states of Europe that Britain and America are fighting. There are others again who think that it is for the preservation of the Anglo-American

interests in the world that they have been fighting. There may be elements of truth here and there. On the one hand there is the German cry for vengeance on the victors of 1918, her vaulting ambition along with that of Italy and Japan, and the aggressive nationalism they preached, and on the other, there are the principles of justice, the question of safety and security of smaller states, of democracy and of the Anglo-American interests—these seem to be the causes of the present war. On the one side there is the grim resolve of Britain, America, Russia and China to destroy Nazi-Germany, and Militarist Japan and Fascist Italy, on the other, there is the deathless determination of Germany, Italy and Japan to destroy the British Empire, American supremacy, Stalin's Russia and Chiang Kai-Shek's China.

A war is not always a trial of strength and valour, Diplomacy plays a great part and a nation may win a war, without winning a single battle. There are stories that a fox kills a lion. Who will win? In the vagary and witchery of politics prophecies are at best random shots and the world will not be surprised, if history repeats itself and Fascism, Nazism and Militarism vanish from the world and the cause of peace, democracy and communism triumphs.

PATRIOTISM IS NOT ENOUGH

In an age of patriotic fervour we live, move and have our being. Never before patriotic feelings ran so high as at present. Never before man and woman marched shoulder to shoulder for the sake of their country as now. Never before the youths of a country readily responded to the clarion call of their motherland as at present. Seldom has India witnessed such records of patriotic activities as at the present age. There is therefore an impression that patriotism is the crown of all virtues in life, and that if a man is patriotic all his lapses and deficiencies are made good. Patriotism overlooks all our defects, washes all our crimes, turns an idiot into a hero, a sinner into a saint, and a murderer into a martyr.

Patriotism is an excellent virtue, and there cannot be two opinions on it. But it is not all. There are other virtues which must be taken into consideration, if we are to judge a man properly. Our life is a bundle of duties. Every man has to do certain duties towards his own self, towards the members of his own family, towards his own country, towards humanity and towards God, the Almighty. On the right performance of these duties depends his real worth in life. It is true that not infrequently conflicts of duty, clashes of desire spring up and puzzle a man, a man at the post of his duty. But on the successful determination of the right duty, at the right hour, depends his greatness. The path of duty is seldom strewn with roses ; it is a thorny path. But it is the way to glory. Patriotism cannot therefore be regarded as the sole test to judge a man. Patriotism only takes into account how far a man loves his own mother country. This

love for his motherland is only one of the many determining factors and must be weighed along with his other qualities of head and heart.

A man has to perform certain duties to his own self. If a promising boy in his teens gives up his educational career and joins a movement directed towards the emancipation of his dependent country and sacrifices his life in pursuance of the said ideal his conduct is open to criticism. On the successful completion of his career he may play a glorious role in the political drama of his country. If a Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru or a Subhas Bose cuts short his training when he is in the school, India misses his valuable services. Let him flower and blossom in full, and let his sweet scent spread out. It is no good to pluck up the tender flower buds early. Let us make a garland of full grown flowers for our motherland, and let us not nip them in the bud.

A man has again certain duties towards the members of his family. If an only son of a very poor and ailing father, a father who has spent his all for the education of his said son, deserts him to his lot and spends his days and nights in singing "*Bandemataram*" and joining political processions surely his conduct is to be condemned. A man who does not love his parents can hardly love his country. A man who does not love his children can seldom love his motherland. In a free country the parents and the children of a man who joins in a movement for the sake of his country may be fed by his countrymen but in a dependent country like India they are often the targets of insult and objects of ridicule.

Again, a man has to discharge his duties towards humanity, to man—irrespective of his creed, colour and

country. Here crops up the question of internationalism and nationalism. Every man has a right to live in just as every other man has. "My country right or wrong"—is a false slogan and is the cause of aggressive nationalism and consequently of war. Every man therefore should not only love his country, but also, in a degree, love all the countries of the world. Patriotism rightly understood does not foster hatred towards other countries. "Live and let live"—is a policy of compromise and accommodation which only ensures peace and harmony in the world.

Above all a man has his duties towards the Almighty. God is, and the grave is not the end of life. The glories of our blood and state are shadows, not substantial things ; only the actions of the just last. Noble deeds are to be nobly done. Patriotism bereft of this divine light loses its glory and degenerates into mad frenzy.

It is true that there are instances when a man urged by an irresistible patriotic impulse leaves his home and hearth to fight for the cause of his country. It is such an impulse which led Joan of Arch to fight for France. The history of American War of Independence and of Irish Home Rule Movement etc. are full of many noble names who kicked at all considerations of home life and fought for country's freedom. But we must remember that what is possible for lions and tigers is not possible for cats and rats.

There is a tendency among us to belittle the importance of all other duties in life and magnify patriotism. There are youngmen among us who often forget that they, with their family, also form a part of the nation, and their betterment is the improvement of the country. This over-emphasis of the virtue of patriotism has caused many hardships in the country. This is said not to disparage

patriotism. Far from it. This is stated only for a correct and proper estimate of a noble virtue, uninfluenced by any other consideration. Among all human virtues it is a dazzling gem and by its side all other virtues pale into insignificance. This is the reason why we should remember that in order to make a correct appreciation of a man we must not only take into account his love towards his country, but also his devotion to duty in diverse other spheres of life.

SCIENCE AND MODERN WARFARE

War rouses in us a sense of awe, a feeling of terror and horror. Such was the feeling in the old days of *Kurukshetra* or Troy. Such was the sense in the days of Thermopælye and Marathan, when science was born. Such was the idea in the days of Trafalgar and Waterloo, when science was in its infancy. And such was the feeling in the days of the last Great War, when science was young. But never before in the history of man war meant so much horror and terror as at present. Never before, "the demon of barbarity was let loose" with more cruelty. Never before the world was turned into a shambles saturated with the blood of mankind and permeated with the primitive instincts of hatred and ferocity. We read war news, see war pictures and are struck dumb with awe and terror. And in sheer disgust, we speak ill of science for all these acts of inhumanity and cruelty.

Modern war, "an avalanche of fire and steel", is a war of the scientists. The warriors are simply tools for the

application of their inventions. Nazi-Germany has revolutionised the whole conception of war. Yoked to the state wheel of war, science has extended the front of war from the land to the sea, and then to the air. Modern warfare is not only mechanical, but chemical and bacteriological as well.

Every thesis has its anti-thesis ; every disease has its remedy ; every weapon of death has also a weapon of life. The invention of a war-appliance is followed by the invention of a counter-appliance to nullify the effect of the former. Thus, against gas we have gas-mask, against magnetic and acoustic mines we have mine-sweepers etc., against tanks we have anti-tank-guns, against U-boats and submarines we have depth-charges, and against aerial bombing we have anti-aircraft guns, and barrage balloons etc. So modern war is really fought out, not only on the field or in the air, or sea, but in the laboratory as well. In the factory and the laboratory is run the race of armaments.

When we see the present war pictures, the first thing which strikes us is the tank. It may be compared to the armoured knights of the medieval age. It may be called a moving fortress, spreading death and devastation, and playing havoc over the area it traverses, disregarding any resistance and obstacles it meets with. It plays the part which the elephants played in the pre-science age.

Broadening speaking there are three kinds of tanks, e. g. (1) the light tanks, (2) the medium tanks, and (3) the heavy tanks. The light tank crawls over all barriers in its way. But owing to its lightness, it cannot long stand the anti-tank gun fires. The Russians have invented a kind of heavy tank which does not get plunged in mud. A type of

tank has been invented by the Germans which, instead of firing cannon, throws liquid fire causing a complete and thorough devastation over the affected area. Behind these tanks follow the mechanised troops, that is, troops in swift-moving vehicles equipped with modern arms and ammunition. And over the tanks fly forward in air the bomber planes of different kinds, the dreadful Luftwaffe of the Germans. The tanks pierce through the enemy line, even the Maginot line, a line the impregnability of which had been sedulously fortified as a legend, lulling the French into a sense of false security.

Next to the tanks come aeroplanes. Broadly speaking there are two kinds of aeroplanes e. g, (1) those which fly from land, and (2) those which fly from sea, called sea-planes. There is a slight difference in shape and size in these two kinds,—one alights on land, while the other on both land and sea. Besides throwing bombs, the planes survey enemy positions, and take photos and carry troops. The bomber planes drop down bombs on the enemy kingdom with a view not only to destroy military objectives, but also to create panic, and undermine the *morale* of the people. The aeroplanes also drop down para-troops on the enemy land to attack the enemy in the rear, when it is engaged in repulsing the violent attacks of the tanks and the mechanised troops.

What a variety of bombs has been invented to kill man, and destroy his property ! Incendiary bombs, gas bombs, time bombs, and there are bombs containing germs of disease. There are colossal bombs weighing $21\frac{1}{2}$ tons (68 mds) which spread fire on an area of half a mile. These are used to cut off the supply of water, electric power, and railway termini. There is a kind of innocent bombs which

emit flashes of light only, and are used to examine enemy position.

The navy plays an important part in warfare. It is with its help that food-stuff and raw materials are imported in the countries affected with war in convoy system. A land surrounded by seas is mainly protected by the navy. The navy is composed mainly of (1) cruisers, (2) destroyers, (3) sub-marines, (4) cargo-ships etc. Furnished with torpedoes the submarines, with the help of compressed air, regulate water in their tanks and sink and float at pleasure.

Next to mechanical warfare come chemical and bacteriological warfare. These kinds of warfare are more cruel, more savage and take a heavy toll of life. In the last Great War insects feeding upon crops were let loose over the enemy country to destroy their food-stuff, and create famine in their land of plenty.

Then, there is economic warfare. A country with which hostilities are likely to commence is first assailed economically. Its assets, the gold reserve, the bank balance, the merchandise, the vessels in the harbour are freezed and seized. A campaign of economic boycott in the international market is launched in. The supply of raw materials and the supply of food-stuff are stopped. A policy of economic isolation is pursued. The civil population of the country is thus hard hit. A heavy curtailment of the necessities of the people follows.

The activities of the people known as fifth columnists are a new feature in modern war. A large number of people disguised themselves as merchants tourists, journalists, technicians etc. settle in the country with which a trial of strength would soon follow. With radio sets in

their pockets, these people communicate the internal condition of the country to their masters. And when the time is ripe, they throw off their masks, and engage themselves in acts of sabotage, and in fanning the flames of internal discord, confusion and chaos.

In the matter of aeroplanes and, *blitzkrieg* (lightning war), in the matter of para-troops and the fifth column activities etc. the Nazi-Germany has displayed new and novel war tactics which have elicited praise even from Mr. Winston Churchill. We know not yet what new weapons are being made in the arsenal of Germany, Russia, Britain, and America. All nations are boasting of their secret weapons. And the boast is not vain. The pilotless aircraft and flying bombs used by the Germans over England are marvels of science.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A PICE

Born in a castle where every door is guarded by the armed sentry I was weighed, examined and carefully counted, packed and despatched to another citadel. Here I was again checked and counted—indeed wherever I go I am counted and yet people despise me—and made over to a species of living beings called in the earth “man”. Released thus from my chained life, I heaved a sigh of relief. Since then I have been moving from hand to hand and I live much longer than the span of a human life. I have seen three generations of human life and yet I am not old enough for the grave. But there are ominous signs on

the horizon. I am told my death is in sight. This urges me to record some of the reminiscences of my life.

It is true men may not take any interest in my life-story. I am ugly ; I give no sound ; I am poor. The rich consider it beneath their dignity to higggle for me and yet they are not ashamed of higgling. But I am the idol of the poor,—the beggar keeps me in his bosom ; the *Beriwalla* in his till, the vegetable-dealer underneath his bag and the *pan dealer* in his drawer. Time was when the Europeans did not touch me at all, partly because I am an Indian copper coin of low denomination and I am brown. This colour prejudice I learn exists in the civilized human world where man hates man for being brown. But I am a lifeless matter. You despise me as I cannot move and cannot talk. But how many of the human world can talk as they like, and move as they desire. But the war has changed the situation and I am now the favourite with all. The war has made touchable an untouchable. Indeed the plight of human beings in certain countries sometimes led me to think that the supreme creation of God was more inanimate than the inanimate world.

Believe me, I do not mind being neglected by the so-called rich. Many consider that the so-called poor are poor and the so-called rich are rich. All that glitters is not gold. I have seen people clad in cheap European costume, moving in a car, with cigar in his fingers, glasses on eyes, hair brushed back, with darwans and English dog at the gate and taking out a cheque book whenever he is required to pay. But I can solemnly say and speak on oath that they are the poorest of the poor, much worse than a *Beri dealer* at the crossing of any two main streets of a city. This is one picture. I have again seen people whom men

call beggars but who can buy these people and they are really rich.

With the advance of the present war, people began to look at me with loving care and affection. Everybody, the rich and the poor, wants to possess me and if possessed does not desire to part with me. At last a business man—I shall not disclose his name—at dead of night opened a box wherein I was consigned for several months and he took me out and held discussions with his wife and eldest son and decided to keep me buried in the corner of a house. For about a year I was confined in a pot within earth. Once a month I could see the light of day and from the discussions my master had with his wife, I gathered that the Government people were out to punish the people who had hoarded us. I was mad in joy for nobody likes a life in a dark dungeon. It is better to undergo physical torture and suffer the pain of being counted. But subsequently I learnt that Govt. would seize me and kill me and would utilize my flesh for the creation of more coins. The change is a change from frying pan to fire. And I got my release. The businessman made a gift of me to a deity in a temple. Since then I have been enjoying some sort of active life though my circulation is curtailed. I was like a prisoner in solitary cell but now I am like a Bengali detenu. In the evening of my life—as my edge is worn out and as Government desire my death, I muse on my past. I had the fortune or misfortune to look at my new comrade recently made by Govt. I confess at the first sight I could not restrain my laughter though I am not given to laughter. It is a pigmy in size with a hole inside. I took pride in the fact that though poor, I was born in His Majesty's mint and pass from hand to hand in the name of the King

Emperor and inspire confidence while my friend excites only laughter from the people and even the *Beri* dealer criticizes the fiscal policy of Government.

I cannot conclude this sketch of mine, without referring to an amusing incident of my life. Once I had been in the possession of a blind beggar but a lame beggar stole me from him. The lame beggar stood with me on his palm, at the steps of the Senate House, Calcutta to wish the University examinees success in the examination and he got many pieces of copper coins (those were not the famine days of copper coins) much beyond his wild expectation. In a moment of supreme satisfaction, in a moment of a great spiritual urge he threw me down before the goddess *Kali*. I smiled within myself—thinking how men steal to win spiritual salvation. Verily, man to my experience, is an inconsistent, irrational animal and as for India, or a dependent country, the people are only breathing baggages, worse than the inanimate, for all their thoughts and ideas are only outpourings of a manacled mind in a camouflaged world.

The present war, so far as I can see, has given us two blessings. The value of a copper pice, that is, my humble self, has been increased. The blessing number two is that the war has turned everybody a politician, diplomat, and a war-critic. Those who are blissfully ignorant of history discuss now big problems of post-war reconstruction. All hawkers are the best war critics.

HOW TO MEET AN AIR-RAID (A. R. P.)

The Government of India has declared the whole of Bengal "Red area," that is, a place which may be bombed by the enemy any day, any moment. This must not create any panic in any quarter. This must not induce anybody to take a solemn vow to leave Bengal with bags and baggages. Indeed with the occupation of Burma by the Japanese, with the regular bombing of Chittagong and its neighbourhood, with their frequent visits to the second city of the British Empire such a declaration is natural.

The main objects of an air-raid are destruction of military and its allied industries, creation of chaos and confusion and disorganization of internal law and order. The Government, in the light of experiences gathered from different theatres of war, has evolved a scheme which, if followed, would minimise the effects of an air-raid and reduce the number of casualties. Various measures have been adopted. Baffle walls have been constructed or sand bags have been placed in front of the buildings, slit trenches have been dug in parks and open spaces where the people may take shelter. Public air-raid shelters have been made different places and suitable private buildings have been declared as public air-raid shelters. Tube wells have been sunk and water reservoirs have been made. The glass panes have been removed from windows etc. All these are meant for the safety of the people from the fatal effects of splinters and blasts of a bomb, there being nothing which can save a man from a direct hit. The street lights are shaded and they can be put out when the siren goes. Every householder has been advised to keep ready a room in the ground floor equipped with necessary

articles where during a raid the inmates are to retire, armed with cotton and vaseline and stirrup pump. Through the press, the platform, the pamphlet, the radio, and particularly through the efforts of the A. R. P. wardens the people have been taught what to do, and what not to do, at home, in street, at night or in day.

It is not with a spirit of philosophic disregard for life, nor with a spirit of a false sense of bravado that we should receive an air-raid. It is not in a spirit of light-hearted youthfulness, not in an attitude of sure death, with eyes closed and hands lifted up in the sky, waiting for the call of death but in a spirit of coolness and calmness, keeping alert wit and intellect that we should meet an air-raid.

The organization which deals with these matters is known as A. R. P. These three letters which meet us here, there and everywhere stand for three, rather two words,—Air-raid Precautions and the expression means the measures taken against aerial bombing. These are passive defensive measures for the safety of life and property from the air-raid menace. The A. R. P. services consist of (a) The Rescue service, (b) The Casualty service, (c) The Communication service, (d) The Depot service and (e) The Warden service.

The Rescue service consisting of Rescue parties is meant to extricate people trapped under the debris of demolished houses. The parties carry out demolition to such an extent as is necessary to rescue trapped people. The Casualty service has five wings dealing with (a) ambulance, (b) mobile First-aid parties, (c) Sitting case cars, (d) First-aid Posts and, (e) Mobile First-aid units. The First-aid posts are located in different parts of the city, each in charge of a doctor. The first-aiders are for the treatment of light casualties, the serious ones are to be attended to

in hospitals. The communication service is concerned with arrangement for the proper transmission of damage reports from Wardens' posts to Report and Control centres. The service consists of the staff of the Report and Control Centres and despatch riders for carrying messages from the centres to the service Depot. The Depot service consists of the staff and other personnel posted at A. R. P. depots where parties of the casualty and rescue services are housed with their vehicles. The Warden's service consists of men, who are the connecting links between the organization and the public, advising and instructing the people and in case of raid they are reporting agencies.

An air-raid signal announcing the approach of an enemy plane consists of several blasts of the siren of varying pitch, each of several seconds' duration but for a total period of four minutes. The departure of the enemy plane is indicated by an "all-clear" signal which consists of a long blast of the siren for two minutes.

For the purpose of A. R. P. organization, Calcutta is divided into 22 sub-areas each under a whole-time paid officer, known as Staff Officer. Each sub-area is divided into a number of Wardens' post areas, each under a paid officer, known as Post Warden. This is the place where the wardens assemble and reports of air-raid damage are sent from here to the Report Centre. This is practically the A. R. P. information centre.

None should play with fire. Politics or party considerations have no place in it. A bomb does not respect an apostle of non-violence, nor a vegetarian and makes no distinction between a socialist or a capitalist, a pro-British or an anti-British. Life must be saved, property must be protected and an air-raid is to be met calmly and coolly, faithfully following the instructions of the A. R. P.

THE BEGGAR PROBLEM

For the disobedience of Adam and Eve man earns his bread by the sweat of his brow. But what about those unfortunate children of them who have no eyes to see, no ears to hear, no legs to stand upon, no hands to work with, nor any relative to stretch out his helping hand towards them? What about those miserable people who have the limbs of the body yet, by an irony of circumstances, a freak of fate, move about for a morsel of food from door to door? They fight out the life's battle with no better weapon than the beggar's bowl. The problem of the maintenance of these, the poor and the wretched, the blind and the lame, the weak and the infirm, the deaf and the dumb is the beggar problem.

There are beggars and beggars. There are beggars who, driven out of employment, find no other easy means of livelihood but begging. They pretend to be lame or blind or a *Sanyasi* renouncing the world in sheer disgust. There are again beggars, real and genuine who being victims of frowns of fortune, of tyranny and oppression take to begging for livelihood. But having regard to the mask which the former wear, it is very difficult to distinguish the sheep from the goats, the real from the pretenders.

Indians are nothing, if not religious. They take so many men as many gods. The sight of a beggar that greets their eyes is the sight of a god in disguise. Every Indian considers it his primary duty to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked and to nurse the sick. Even a half-fed Indian will smilingly share his food with a starving beggar. This indirectly has encouraged begging. "The life" says Swami Vivekananda, is short, the vanities of the world are tran-

sitory but they alone live who live for others, the rest are more dead than alive." Inspired by this, the Hindus serve and worship the Lord, "coming in the shape of the diseased, coming in the shape of the lunatic, the leper."

He who lendeth to the poor lendeth to the Lord—so the Bible says. And a devout Christian unlooses the strings of his purse, whenever he meets a beggar standing close to his church, with hungry face and with hat, upside turned down. The Man-in-Black hates begging from the core of his heart, but whenever a beggar appears before him, out comes a coin from his pocket. However steny-hearted a man may be, the sight of the suffering humanity melts down his iron heart. These sentiments urge men to maintain the beggars.

Many take to begging as an easy means of livelihood, vanquished as they are in the struggle for existence. The beggars wearing either the garb of a *Sanyasi* or the badge of a lame person are plentiful like black berries. It is said that some people run business through beggars. They get together some crippled children and adults and try to make money out of them by compelling them to beg in public places. This is inhuman and criminal.

The streets of a city are strewn with beggars. You talk with a gentleman standing on the foot-path and out emerges a frail figure in front of you, much to your disgust. You sit for a university examination, and on the steps of the examination hall beggars are there to wish you success! The diseased beggar spreads germs of poison, and is a problem for the Corporation.

Though beggars are seen in countless number in the streets of a town, the beggar problem is not confined to the city-life only. The beggars are born in the village, and

nursed in the towns. They remain in the village so long as they can afford. When starvation stares them in their face, they move rather unwillingly, leaving their sacred cottages, if any, to the towns in the fond hope that those places of palaces and mansions would give them some shelter and food. When crops fail, a natural calamity like a cyclone, or an earthquake, or a famine visits a locality, thousands are rendered homeless and many turn beggars. With their little reserve exhausted, cattle and utensils sold, help from any relative denied, and disappointed in local charity they march in quest of food and shelter, hungry and tired for their bread. If the Union Boards, Local Boards, District Boards employ these men in work of public utility, e. g. in cutting down jungles, clearing water hyacinth, making roads they may get some food and the Boards also cheap service.

The problem is at once social, economic and political. It is social, because the beggars are a burden to the society. It is economic, for larger the number of the beggars, the greater the poverty of the country. It is political, because the problem is the concern of the state.

After all, the beggar is a symbol of a social disease and as members of the society we are responsible for that social malady. The beggar is not a nuisance but a problem. If poverty and disease are a nuisance then begging is a nuisance. But poverty and disease are problems of food and clothing; it is the question of development of a man's personality. And personality can only be developed when we cease to dub him as a nuisance.

How to tackle the problem? Individual charity is there; it was there, it will be there. Law cannot kill it; want cannot damp it. Means must be devised to provide

for a morsel of food for those unfortunate children of Adam and Eve. There is legislation in Europe prohibiting, private begging. The genuine beggars are maintained at state cost. The able-bodied are made to work, and the diseased are segregated and isolated from the rest for treatment. The contributions from the public augment the state fund. Such a piece of legislation is necessary for India to combat the ever swelling problem of the beggars. The Government of Bengal maintain a few Vagrants' Homes where the street beggars of Calcutta are removed by the police by virtue of an Ordinance of the Governor.

EAST AND WEST—WHAT ONE CAN LEARN FROM THE OTHER.

Kipling has sung, "The East is East, West is West.
And never the twain shall meet."

The above statement is historically wrong, politically misconceived and contains germs of international discord and dissention. Even before Alexander invaded India, East and West had met not only geographically but also in the realm of thoughts. With the invasion of Alexander there were frequent exchanges of ideas between them. In these lines of the poet many find an air of contempt for all that the East stands for, and a pose of superiority of the West.

In the realm of ideas there is no east, no west, no north, no south. Ideas float and soar; they know no barriers, respect no caste, creed or colour. Yet there are certain ideas which are peculiar to a certain country, to the genius of a certain people—just like the growth of certain fruits

in certain areas. East is spiritualistic while West is materialistic. East is philosophical while West is scientific. East cares more for spiritual salvation than for material possession. East glorifies a life of renunciation while West adores a life of ease and comfort. From the east have flown all the great religions of the world, and from the West have emanated all the great scientific products. The East is the nursery of religion ; the West is the stronghold of science. Neither science which makes much of our body, nor religion which glorifies the spirit is the right path of life. "Apart from religion" says Whitehead, "human life is a flash of occasional enjoyments".

Life is not all matter, nor all spirit ; it is both. Neither the life of a *sadhu* renouncing the world and sitting in deep meditation in a mountain-cave when his home is in flames, nor that of a scientist sitting coolly in his laboratory and taxing his brain to find out new weapons of life and death, leaving his hearth and home to the tender mercies of the robbers is an ideal one. The great thinkers of the world like Romain Rolland, Bertrand Russel and Dr. Tagore maintain that on the fusion of the cultures of the East and the West rest the future glory and salvation of man. Human civilization will be at its zenith when the two will not only meet but embrace in ties of love, exchanging ideas, each learning from the other whatever the other may know, on a footing of equality. Let there be mutual understanding ; let there be give-and-take, not in a spirit of victory and defeat, but in a spirit of love and friendship.

The glory of the East lies in her philosophy, ideas treasured up in the *Upanisads*, and the *Gita*, ideas which competent Western scholars like Maxmuller, thinkers like Goethe extolled to the skies, ideas for which the world is

worth living. The East shall show to the warring world as Mahatmaji puts it, "that victory will be not to him who can slay, but to him who can accept death" and a time will come when the unarmed shall dare to stand up to the fully armed, and "meet crude force with soul force."

Unfortunately there are people in the East who, forgetting the glories of their own civilization fall a victim to the glare of western civilization. Dr. Rabindra Nath Tagore denounces this tendency among youngmen in the following words. "It fills my heart with a great feeling of dismay when among the present generation of youngmen, I see signs of their succumbing to a fascination for mere size and power. They go about seeking for civilization amongst the wildness of sky-scrappers, in the shrieking headlines of news journals, and the shouting vociferation of the demagogues. They roam in the dusk begging for a loan from some glow-worm which can only hold its niggardly lantern for the purpose of crawling towards its nearest dust. Our living society which should have dance in its steps, music in its voice, beauty in its limbs, which should have its metaphor in stars and flowers, maintaining its harmony with God's creation fails to fascinate the youths."

There are many in the West to whom the East means a land of superstition, an abode of magic, a place peopled with poor, uncultured human creatures, an object of pity, a subject for exploitation. How far Eastern disregard for material life is responsible for her political bondage is a question. But political bondage or not, East can teach West for years together not only philosophy and religion, but also politics, arts and crafts. The vanquished Greece taught Rome, the victor. There are again many in the

East who look down upon the Western pomp and splendour and engage themselves in the quest for eternal life. Rolling in luxury, with nations at the heels, West has no mood to learn the Truths of religion and philosophy from the East. But a time comes in life when greed of gold, and pomp and power do not satisfy human hunger. Man yearns for peace, born of mental quietude, peace sprung from spiritual rest.

West may sit at the feet of the East to learn the greatness of the spirit and the largeness of the soul. West can bring back more sincerity in their society, more purity in their religion. The worship of hypocrisy in the name of civilization and the conflicts and turmoils of the greed for gold would cease, if she learns from the East. The East also should learn from the West how to enjoy better health, more fun and more life. The false glorification of poverty and hunger may cease, if the East wakes up and looks at the West in a spirit to learn.

The wars and conflicts in the outer world are the manifestations of some conflicts in the internal mind of man. East has her unique message to put a stop to all mental agony. She has her own remedy to restrain, control, if not to kill the sleeping animal in man. The sooner the West learns it, the better for her. And the earlier the East learns science, and scientific methods of life she lives, not to enjoy life, but to teach mankind her unique message of truth the better for her. "In spite of all appearances to the contrary," says Dr. Tagore. "I steadfastly cherish the hope that East and West shall meet."

WAR-TIME EDUCATION

War is a period of abnormal life, it is a period of national travail, sorrow and suffering. It is a period when all the national resources are pooled together in a gigantic effort to win the war which determines the very existence or expansion of a nation. At a time like this, it is not difficult to realise that the normal activities of man, natural pursuits of life remain neglected; often suspended. These do not receive the same amount of care and attention as they deserve in peace time. No wonder then that the cause of education also suffers in a period when war, the monster of human history, is let loose.

The people of countries directly or indirectly involved in a war live always with the sword of Damocles—the threat of aerial bombing—hanging over them. At a time like this life is insecure; property is inconstant; in the midst of life people are in death. The educational atmosphere is absent. The calm, quiet and serene mental condition necessary to foster learning is nowhere to be found. Neither in the sky above, nor on the surface of the land we live in, nor underground, nor on the surface of the ocean, nor below it, is there a place of refuge where man can live in peace and heave a sigh of relief. No education can flower in such an environment.

With war comes evacuation which means mass removal of population from places likely to be bombed. With the removal of the people educational institutions move from place to place. And the removal is not an easy task in these days when civil railway communication has been heavily curtailed. If the students are available, the teachers are not found. Among the students many take to war-

service due to hard economic condition prevailing in a war-torn country. Many students take, before the end of their college career, appointments in various war or its allied services. The Air-raid Precautionary services, the Civic Guards, the Civil Pioneer Force etc. have engaged a large number of Indian students and teachers. The various departments of Civil Supplies and the factories have also employed them. Then there are the recruitments to the army, navy and air forces. These appointments though alleviate the economic distress of the people to a certain extent but they hamper the cause of education. The brilliant careers are often cut short ; many a flower is sometimes nipped in the bud. The war monster devours the largest number of medical, engineering and science students.

It is true in free countries the students and the teachers have to court greater hardship. There they, within a certain age-limit, are compulsorily recruited to the forces. But it is also true that the arrangements for the education of the boys and girls in those lands leave nothing to be desired. We learn that despite evacuation difficulties 99% of the children of England are receiving full-time education. Again the chronicle of what is being achieved in the Chinese Universities is one of epic grandeur. Assailed from the air and on land, the apparatus and even the furniture of the universities are bodily shifted and taken from place to place by the students and the teachers.

The attitude of the free countries towards education even in war-time throws a flood of light on its importance in nation building work of a country. In education lies the hope of the future, on education rests the responsibility of post-war reconstruction. If education were neglected, the hands of the clock of progress of a country would be pushed

back. Education, therefore, claims a preferential treatment during a war. Other things may wait but education must not, particularly in a country like ours. Every attempt should be made to keep the torch of education burning, though it may be shaded like the present electric lights on the streets of Calcutta.

Dull, dismal and desolate is the picture India presents when we look to the educational arrangements made in our country during this war. With the bombing of Chittagong and Calcutta in December 1942 confusion, chaos and panic prevailed in the country and it infected the serene temples of learning. Several offices of the Calcutta University shifted to the country side, several University examination centres were closed. Many schools in Calcutta and Chittagong stopped functioning. Some of the colleges in Calcutta opened their branches in the country side. This task of removal of an educational institution from a city to the country side is a huge one and requires large sums of money. Here it is that the Government should render help. Here it is that we feel for the need of a national government, a government which will emulate the examples of England and China in spheres of our education.

Education is one of the crying needs of our country. Our educational system is imperfect and inadequate. What little education we have, what little amount of light we have, we can ill afford to sacrifice. We cannot tolerate an eclipse in the temple of learning. This is more so, when we know not what would be our fate on the conclusion of this war. If education cannot be expanded, let it not be curtailed. If the various schemes for development of our education cannot be given effect to during this period of war, let us not sacrifice what we have. We can forego luxuries.

and comforts. We can suffer all discomforts, hardship. We should therefore launch in a campaign to help the schools and colleges hit by the present war and keep them functioning. Arrangements should be made to open the schools and colleges which closed down with the air-raid and to see them continuing their task whatever may be the political situation.

War is a passing phase in the life of a nation; it is an eclipse of civilization and culture. As Dr. K. D. Nag has said, "Drowning the temporary typhoons of wars and violent conquests the voice of the Universal Man is ever ringing in our ears and the corridors of history are reverberating with the music of human sympathy." Dr. Nag and, indeed, all great thinkers of the world, believe that "Civilized humanity will ultimately triumph over all the savage instincts of destruction." And at the conclusion of war the people would feel the loss of man-power and they would realize what a toll of educated blood the war had taken. Herein lies the importance of war-time education.

AVIATION

Aviation comes from Latin, "Avis",—a bird and means travelling in aircraft. For centuries man smarted under the rankling grievance that the birds fly, but man, the supreme creation of God could not fly. Dissatisfied man made attempts, but to no purpose. Sacrifices were made, lives were lost but in vain. Science now came to the rescue of the ambitious man. The aeroplanes came into being. Man now flies, not with his hands and feet but seated in a machine. What had been a dream in the 19th

century was a fact materialized with the dawn of the 20th century. The Wright brothers are, in a sense, fathers of flight as they are the first to fly in a motor-driven machine heavier than air.

Man now enjoys the supreme thrills of ærial flights. He climbs higher and higher, soars and floats over vales and hills, lakes and dales. He crosses the highest peak of the Himalayas, the region hitherto unseen by man. As he flies, the beauty of the panorama of the earth beneath and the blue changing sky above presents to him a unique sight. A sense of pride steals into his mind. He feels, he is the conqueror of air. He cannot but bow his head down to the almighty power of science which has made it possible for him.

Life is short, and the world is not a small doll's house. If there had been no means of easy and swift communication, it would have been difficult for man to attain the stage of civilization that he has attained to-day. Like the proverbial frog in the pond, he would have been confined to his own room. And of all the means of communication aviation is the swiftest. We can finish touring the world in a few months. We move like a bird here and there, and go merrily round the earth. If travelling has any utility, aviation is tenfold useful.

In quick transport, aviation has beaten down all that science has hitherto invented. The passengers, the mails, and parcels are carried from one end of the globe to the other in no time. London is now nearer our home than Delhi of the 19th century. Aviation has shortened time and space.

Aviation has come to help trade and quicken commerce. These are the days of large-scale production. These are the

days when all the commercial centres of the world must be closely connected. Captains of trade and industry like a Thomas Bata, therefore, purchase aeroplanes and tour the world for the promotion of their business.

With the development of aeroplanes, air-travelling came into vogue. The world was united by different air-routes, and mails are carried. Different air services were established. The planes of British Imperial Air Ways carried 20 to 40 passengers at a time. The present war has cut all these air lines. Different schemes are being framed to develop post-war aviation. It is true, travelling in a plane is not as safe as in a train or a steamer, but with the lapse of time, and improvement of science, it will be materialized sooner or later.

The terrible disaster which overtook the giant plane R 101 in 1930 damped the heart of many an air enthusiast. But there is the modern craze for hurry, for speed, and we take to travelling in air-craft. We are now more air-minded.

In the United States of Soviet Union aeroplanes are utilised in sowing seeds in thousands of acres of land. When a famine stalks in the land, when a flood visits a country food is dropped from aeroplanes.

If aviation is useful in peace time, it is indispensable in a modern war. Modern war is aeroplane and gas war. Aeroplanes reconnoitre the position of the enemy. They throw down bombs and reduce towns into ashes, and turn rich countries into deserts. They drop down a gas-jar and a large area becomes lifeless. They safely carry generals over the enemy's country, and give directions to the artillery and cavalry, regarding their movements. Aviation was a great determining factor in the last Great War. Aviation has changed the face of modern warfare. Poet

Tagore sings on the destructive character of a plane thus : — "Arrogant in its pride of power, the lifeless machine soars, unblest by the gods, unacknowledged by the sun or moon,.....Man's profanity rides the region of clouds, defiling with unholy glee the very light of heaven."

Aviation is not free from danger. The æroplane is not yet as safe as a motor car on a smooth road. Aviation is not as comfortable as a railway journey. The machine may revolt and go wrong. Thunder, hailstorm or a cyclone may obstruct, oppose man's victorious triumph through air, and throw him down into the fathomless ocean only to close our eyes for good. But with the progress of science the cases of accident are becoming few and far between.

Thus we see aviation has joys and uses, has dangers as well as delights. It has facilitated commerce and made dangerous war more dangerous. It has also helped to bring about a closer understanding between a nation and a nation. On the conclusion of this war there is vast possibility of the development of civil aviation. The question of aerial transport in the post-war world has been taken up in right earnest by America. Having regard to the phenomenal improvement of science particularly during this period of war, it is no not too much to expect that all the parts of the world will be connected soon with one another. Foreign travel will thus be an easy affair, though it may be confined to the rich alone. The armoured eagles of the united Nations which developed from the fragile machine of the Wrights now pour down ruin on the strongholds of the enemies by day and night.

BLACK-OUT AND THE CIVIC GUARDS

In method, technique, strategy and equipment modern warfare is something new and novel. The German *blitzkrieg* (lightning war)—merciless bombing of civilian population, pounding of the docks, harbour, power-house, railway station, industrial area by the night bombers—is a method to terrorize the people to surrender to the Nazi tyranny. Various are the ways to fight this terrible danger of aerial bombing such as anti-aircraft gun fire, barrage balloon, air-raid shelter, blacking out a city etc.

As a measure of defence, all the lights of the city,—street lights as well as all lights of the dwelling houses, are blacked-out, that is to say, are put out so that the hostile air-craft are unable to locate the big cities. Black-out is a complete obscuration of light, that is prohibition of any light being visible from anywhere. The glare in the sky caused by ordinary street and outside lights makes big cities visible from the air at a distance of many miles and thus makes the game of destruction easy for the enemy. As soon as the siren goes a city is blacked-out. And when the raider passes over, the lights are lit-up again.

At present such a state of grave emergency has not yet reached as would justify daily blacking-out of the city of Calcutta completely. Government are satisfied with the experiments carried on in this behalf, that a city like Calcutta would be able to adapt itself to such a life at the shortest notice. Realizing that daily black-out would have resulted in enormous inconvenience to the general public, and it would have been extremely difficult, if not possible, to have expected compliance with such an order, particularly in the densely built up areas of the northern part

of it the government have accepted the policy of partial obscuration of light. But, in the event of an emergency, the light which is now permitted would be put out. Tests have been carried out to ensure that the change-over from the state of partial obscuration to the state of total obscuration can be effected without difficulty.

To eliminate the glare, the lights are so shaded that no direct rays can escape above the horizontal, allowing only bright moon-light distributed below. The head lights of the cars are properly masked, and the lights of other carriages are screened. In England the intensity of light allowed in streets is equal only to star-light, and bright moonlight is allowed only in special production areas, where lights can be switched off at a very short notice. It is true that life in such a dim light in a city is full of hardship. It means cancellation of ordinary duties of many; it means loss of wages of many day-labourers. It means no-doubt merry nights for the pick-pockets etc. But when the real danger would come, everybody would clear up the streets, out of love of life. None should oppose a war measure whereby life may be saved from the jaws of death. We must therefore comply with the requirements of the authorities in this behalf.

An organization of civic guards has been started as a measure of defence. The members of this organization are recruited from respectable gentlemen of the locality. The civic guards patrol the streets at night, and see that the lighting restriction order is properly complied with. They advise the householder how to keep lights, disarm baseless rumours and help the police in the maintenance of law and order. They are inspiring a sense of security among the people. In government controlled shops they help in

forming a queue, assist the shopkeepers in the distribution of the articles.

It is true that inspite of black-out, inspite of complete obscuration of light the enemy succeeded in bombing some of the best buildings of London. It is also true that the enemy often uses fire-bombs, when in darkness he fails to recognize the aim of his target. It is also true that the enemy may have in his possession charts and maps, pointing out the military objectives. But these must not depress our heart. We must take courage in both hands, and see what can be done to defeat the enemy. We must remember that measures like these have succeeded to turn down the enemy plans, and London still stands, inspite of all the attempts of the enemy to destroy the city.

Non-co-operation with government measures like these would be suicidal. We must guard up our loins, and carry out all measures of war-defence as soldiers. If, inspite of all this, the enemy succeeds, black-out would reduce the mischief likely to be done. When the night bombers vulture-like would swoop down upon their prey, it would be an act of foolish suicide to keep light burning, disregarding the note of warning of the government. There are people who express doubt as to the effectiveness of black-out. In Russia there is no black-out. At the approach of an enemy bomber all the lights of the locality are put out with the help of a master switch. There are thinkers in England who support reverse black-out and consider that "a glaring canopy of light over principal cities to blind pilots would be more effective protection" than black-out.

The black-out has a spiritual value. It makes the people feel that war is going on, that we may be bombed by the enemy any moment and that in the midst of life we are in death. So long the war goes, we must be accustomed to this, however inconvenient it may be. We must conquer, if there be any at all, our feelings of nervousness on account of a dark city and meet the situation calmly.

GROW MORE FOOD

India, the land of plenty and Bengal, a granary of India are short of food. A terrible famine passed over Bengal in 1943. India, ever rich in natural resources, is confronted with the problem of an acute food shortage. There has been a lot of criticism as to the causes, real or imaginary, which brought about the present problem. Some lay the blame on the war-condition, some on the policy of Government, some on the railway authorities, a few on the cruel harvest God and another group on the kind visits of floods. Let us not quarrel with the causes. The people die silently in villages and in towns for want of food, starvation cases are being admitted into hospitals. These facts are to be faced boldly. Many persons lay blame on the Indian diet, our bad food-habit and ask us to change the same. A few are of the opinion that prayer should be offered to God to relieve our distress.

On a comparison of food production in 1942-44 with 1941-42, it appears that of all the major provinces in India Bengal alone showed a decrease in the acreage of food grains by 7 lacks acres. The reason is not far to seek. Unfavourable weather condition, cyclone, fungus disease, insect pest, evacuation of civil population from certain parts of Bengal due to military reasons and the occupation of large tracts of land by the fighting forces were mainly responsible for this tragic situation.

One of the most practical and easy solutions of the problem is launching in a "Grow More Food" campaign. Indeed, with the declaration of war, when the food problem was not acute, the Government of India, under the leadership of Mr. N. R. Sarker launched in this campaign. But

unfortunately the campaign was not carried into the home of the tillers of the soil. And it did not produce the desired results. The whole propaganda machine of the Government must be set in motion in full swing. The radio, the newspapers, the platform—these mighty weapons are to be used for the creation of a favourable public opinion. Along with this Government propaganda, let the educated public join. We, students, should organize meetings and processions with posters and placards inscribed therein "Grow More Food." Let "Grow More Food" posters greet our eyes wherever we cast our eyes.

But example, it is said, is better than precept. Let all men having the good of the country at heart, grow food-crop on every available piece of land. The railway authorities are reported to have arranged for the cultivation of food-crop on the land lying fallow at the side of the railway lines. Some of the district magistrates are growing food at their bungalows. These are very good signs but we must not stop here. We will have to go to the villages where the cultivators reside. It is true no doubt, if wealthy men join the people to cultivate land. It will have a great psychological effect and will give a great impetus to the movement. But the village people must understand the full significance of the campaign.

There is plenty of land in India; there are sufficient labourers and the seeds are also available. Capital, organization and guidance are wanted. Here it is that we ask for the Government to help the people. Here it is that the initiative should be taken by the Government. Along with the Government the public spirited men should co-operate and do all that is necessary to make the movement a success. If the people are indifferent, if the cultivators turn

a deaf ear to the gospel of grow-more-food no radio speech or film show would be of any value.

It is however not an easy task to persuade our cultivators to take to "Grow More Food". Unfortunately for us they suspect any thing coming from the Government. If a Sub-Inspector of Police and a Circle Officer etc. tour the villages along with the national leaders of the locality and appeal to the villagers to grow more food, the people would obey. If the motive behind the move is clearly explained, there is no reason why the people should refuse active participation in the campaign. It is for these leaders to galvanize the depressed, the drooping and the dying mass of the country and on their response rests the success of the scheme. In England the Grow More Food campaign has been so scientifically planned and energetically conducted that production of food there is satisfactory. There the campaign is so realistic that Queen Mary's rose garden is converted into a vegetable garden. Sir Vijay Anand says that the Central Government allowed 2 crores of rupees for this campaign to feed 400 millions while England has been spending 202 crores to feed 40 millions. England has expanded her food production by 70% since war.

There are economists who opine that India even now produces much unwanted commercial crops like cotton and sugar canes. These crops now suffer from over-production. Lands engaged in these crops may be utilized for production of food-crop. The cultivation of food-crop may be intensified. In carrying out the campaign we must see that no encroachment on grass lands takes place for that would mean curtailment of fodder and milk supply. We must bear in mind that the fulfilment of this campaign would facilitate the post-war reconstruceion of Indian agriculture.

If the present is dark, let not the future be darker. It is no good lamenting over the sad past ; it is no good regretting the dismal present. If we carry on the campaign with sincerity of purpose we will be able to gather the harvest of the campaign within two or three months. It is true the people are impatient ; they cry for food and two months' delay would mean loss of thousands of people. But while temporary arrangements for the immediate relief are being made, the campaign of grow-more-food should not only be launched in, but intensified. On the success of the campaign will depend the safety of millions of souls. We should fight the immediate problem as best as we could as well as carry on this campaign for the better future. We should remember that food is, as President Roosevelt has said, a weapon as important as munitions in a war.

THE PROBLEM OF UNEMPLOYMENT

Man earns his bread by the sweat of his brow. But what about those unfortunate children of them who though prepared for the sweat of their brow, yet cannot earn their bread ? What about those qualified men and women who do not find any occupation for no fault of their own ?

They move hither and thither in search of employment but in vain. In the morning the educated unemployed run to the libraries and look eagerly at the "wanted" columns of the advertisement pages of a newspaper, and in the noon, with applications in their pockets, they approach, with trembling hearts and faltering steps different offices. Their disappointment to "No Vacancy"—board knows no bounds.

They seize their relatives' relatives and get hold of certificates to procure jobs. The unemployed roam hither and thither and knock every body's door to no purpose. Some of them turn thieves and some swindlers. Most of the unemployed are unwelcome burdens of their relatives. Their mental woe goads a few to take refuge in eternal silence by unnatural means.

Unemployment has sapped the energy and robbed the mirth of the middle class home. The problem of finding occupation for them, the solution of their bread-problem is a problem of problems. Disappointment, lack of occupation, idleness and sufferings demoralise the educated youths and a prolonged unemployed is really a menace to the society.

With modern industrialism, the progress of science, the increasing use of the machines, the spread of education, general and technical, there is a large supply of qualified men and women. But the demand for their services is limited. The result is poor pay of the employed few, and unemployment of the many. Add to this, the world wide trade depression, and the axe of retrenchment had been ruthlessly employed to cut down hands.

It is true the problem is not confined to India. But nowhere it is so acute as here. India, inspite of her rich natural resources, is a very poor country, and her chronic poverty has been intensified by this problem.

A family spends considerable amount of money for the education of one of its promising members in the hope that he would be the bread earner member in future. After education when he, with confident hope for a bright future, moves from office to office and the notice, "No Vacancy"—greet him everywhere, his mental state can better be imagined. He tries his hands at business, for many persons

maintain it as the sovereign remedy. But the same fate meets him there. He is kicked out from the service-world.

The youthful dream of his rosy future vanishes into air. He cannot lighten the burden of his parents. In the meanwhile his own family multiplies. His hopes are shattered. He is a beggar, yet he cannot beg from door to door. The cries of his children, the sobs of his wife, the kicks of his relatives, the sighs of his parents make him mad. He hatches plan to commit suicide.

The unemployed is a danger to the state, a curse to the society, a menace to the public. He is discontented, and discontent is the parent of many an ill. He is desperate; he is reckless; he is hopeless. His tears can shake the mighty throne of an emperor. His sighs can burn cities and palaces. The sooner, therefore, the evil of unemployment is removed the better for the country.

Acute as the problem of unemployment is, it has become more acute owing to several factors. India is slowly but surely taking to industrial re-organization which means in our country often employment of foreign technicians, not always with better qualifications than available Indians, and unemployment of many men. To this must be added the prevalence of the present narrow provincial outlook. "The services of my province are for the people of my province"—is a slogan now heard in almost all the provinces.

The problem, it is believed, is one of the main causes of political unrest in India. To tackle the problem of educated unemployment some industrial-magnets and business experts have readily responded to the invitation of the Calcutta University and delivered a series of "career lectures." The Government of Bengal has an Employment Advisor who keeps a record of the educated

unemployed and helps them to get jobs. Both Calcutta and the Dacca Universities have each a Board to help their students to get employment. There are offices which out of a sense of civic duty co-operate with these Boards.

Many men ask the unemployed to take to agriculture, or to set up small businesses. Many brains have written books suggesting solution of the problem but the problem seems to remain as acute as ever, if not more acute than before. Instead of indulging in pious platitudes or unpractical theories, the sooner the problem is approached from practical point of view the better for the country.

The present war is a great boon to the unemployment problem of this country. The Civic Guards, the A. R. P., the munition factories, the Civil Supplies departments have found employment for many young men and women of this country. The army, navy and air forces have also taken a large number of our youngmen. From the point of pure employment, this war is a blessing not doubt. But we cannot but think of the day when the war will be concluded and most of these men will be unemployed. That is a terrible day for these holders of temporary posts. Schemes should now be framed that there may not be any great depression in the post-war world.

MILITARY TRAINING FOR THE INDIANS

We Indians are peace-loving people ; we hate shedding blood. We care more for our spiritual salvation than for material possession. Life with ease we love and adore ; strenuous life we dislike. Buddha has taught us *ahinsa*, Gandhi has been preaching non-violence in thought, speech

and deed. Under the protecting arms of the mighty British lion we live and move, sleep and snore. There are many who would prefer death on the lap of loving malaria to death by a cannon-ball." There are others who are unwilling to win the bubble of reputation at the cannon's mouth. Our gospel of peace is often a screen to cover our cowardice. Love of peace is real, when it springs from strength, and not weakness. "It is excellent," sings Shakespeare, "to have a giant's strength, but it is tyrannous to use it like a giant".

Without the military no state can exist. The world is not replete with Christs, Buddhas and Gandhis. There are, and there will always be wolves and tigers. To fight them not love, but armed force is necessary. To fight force, internal and external force is essential. Saints are few, but sinners are many. We need military training, not to commit international piracy and robbery, in the false name of justice, but to maintain our hearth and home, to live free from the terror of war, and to pursue our peaceful vocations of life. We need military training to resist, should the occasion arise, the sword of a tyrant, the bomb of a greedy Hitler, a wicked Franco and a designing Mussolini.

The present war has once brought in the lime-light the question of India's defence. Before the bombs of a Hitler or a Mussolini neither the philosophy of non-violence of the Mahatma, nor the military skill of the cadets of the Indian Military Academy at Dehra Dun would stand. The harrowing accounts received from the war-fields of Europe beat all past records in horror. Should India be plunged in such a struggle her fate may better be imagined. She must therefore have her army, navy and air forces equipped with all modern arms and ammunition.

There are many people who discourage modern military training for India on the mistaken fear that it would ultimately result in a clash with the state. This does not stand to reason. The crawling baby wants to stand up, and he stands up, but not to fight, but to help his mother. Ignorant in the art of modern warfare India is a very poor ally of the British, nay a perennial concern.

True, India is naturally protected, being guarded by the mountains in the north, and by the ocean in the south. But, in these days of mechanical, chemical and bacteriological warfare natural barriers are but strings of sand. "Security" warns Shakespeare, "is mortals' chiefest enemy".

The nationalist India talks of independence. But in view of her ignorance in the up-to-date military training this is an idle talk. If she is granted independence to-day, it is sure, she cannot keep it to-morrow. Her miseries will only multiply.

Military training does not mean teaching simply how to fall in, and how to march "left and right." It is, thanks to Science, a very complicated affair. The trainings given to the University Training Corps, the Indian Territorial Force, even to the cadets of the Indian Military Academy at Dehra Dun fall far short of the modern requirements. Lord Chatfield's recommendation for modernization of the Indian army is welcome. But more is necessary. Indianization in army, navy and air forces also should be quickened.

The little training which is imparted to the Indians, and which goes by the name of "military training" falls far short of modern military requirements. Under Nazi Germany the art of warfare has undergone revolutionary

changes. Gone is the old classical conception of war, gone are the trench-fighting, cavalry and artillery charges. The mighty Maginot line is no longer safe and secure. The movement of the para-troops, the march of the mechanized unit in land, the swoop of the dive-bombers in the sky, the menace of the magnetic mines, the acoustic mines, the U-boats and flying bombs are elements in present-day war at once new and novel. No country can ignore them. No country can afford to stand ignorant of these new arts of warfare. The fate of France must open the eyes of all old-school military experts. We must be ready, and must not allow ourselves to be caught unprepared, if and when the spectre of war, grim, gaunt and severe—visits this happy land of ours.

The present war has given us a grand opportunity to receive military-training. The Indian forces consisting of its three branches, land, air and navy must attract the Indian youth. The nationalists may not be satisfied with this. Mr. Savarkar however passionately pleads for the enlistment of the Indian youths in the army, navy or air-force. It is not because that he is a lover of the cult of violence, but because of the present international situation. Says he, "We want to be non-violent. That is well and good. But it is not what we want to be, but what the world wants us to be." And he adds, "I prefer a lieutenant or a commander to a Mahamahapadhyaya or a learned scholar of any University."

It would be wrong to suppose that Indians are born cowards, and would, if still better opportunities be given, fight shy of war. There are born soldiers in India. The gallantry of the martial races like the Rajputs, the Sikhs and the Guirkhas is well-known. There are Bengali youths who smilingly embrace death. The services rendered by the Indian soldiers in the last Great War are praised by all. The modern military training we sorely need, and the sooner it is introduced the better for the people and the country as a whole.

POST-WAR ECONOMIC' RE-CONSTRUCTION

In a war-scarred world we live, move and have our being. The economic environment around us is dark, dismal and depressing. But human beings as we are, we look before and after. We look forward to the day when the last shot will be fired and peace will reign, and with peace will usher in a better economic order. The old economic order will die, yielding place to the new. In the loud boom of guns the death rattle of the old order is being heard. The statesmen and the economists of the world are busy now in shaping the steel frame of the new economic structure. It is true that the war is yet to be fought and won and everything depends on the victory of the Allies. It is also true that much depends on the economic relations which will emerge out, out of the ashes of international situation at the conclusion of this war. It may be that the picture that is being drawn by the experts now is intended to be that of the god Siva but subsequently it may be found to be that of a monkey.

The builders of this structure must see that the new order must radiate a new hope to the war-torn countries. It must bring a new message to the war-maimed humanity, to the orphans and the refugees, to the hungry, the depressed and the down-trodden. It must be rooted in the principles of justice, equality and liberty. It must not be the dis-interred skeleton of the old order clothed in a new garb.

The materials for an economic re-construction are not scanty. Besides the joint Anglo-American declaration of August 14, 1941 better known as the Atlantic Charter, there are the speeches and pronouncements of the statesmen, thinkers and writers. From these will emerge the

picture of the economic order now promised to mankind. The four essential human freedoms assured to man on the allied victory are :—(1) Freedom of speech and expression, (2) freedom of religion, (3) freedom from want, (4) and freedom from fear. These are the four pillars of the new order and out of these the students are directly concerned with the number three. President Roosevelt assures man :—"Jobs for those who can work and security for those who need it. The ending of special privileges for a few ; the enjoyments of the fruits of scientific progress by all and constantly raising standard of life." Noble words and nobly uttered.

Sir William Beveridge has framed a scheme for international peace having the happiness of the common man as the goal. How far are all these pious platitudes or sincere utterances, time alone will prove.

We in India, however, are more concerned with the economic fate of our own motherland. Many Indian thinkers entertain grave misgivings as to our economic future. Neither the President of America, nor the Prime Minister of Great Britain makes any hopeful assurance. Their speeches indicate that the Atlantic Charter is meant for the war-torn countries in Europe. The discussions in the American Congress as also in the British Parliament deepen Indian doubt. Mr. Wendell Wilkie after his tour of the East tells the world from America that there will be no more "Eastern slaves for Western profits." He finds a great awakening of the common man all over the world, irrespective of race or colour, nationality or sex. India must not be bled white to redeem European countries.

In India there will be mass unemployment after the war. But she has vast potentialities for increasing employment by industrial advancement and absorbing the techni-

cians trained during this war. Improved agriculture and expansion of scientifically planned and electrified cottage industries can find employment to millions of people released from war-services. The difficulty is to persuade the Government to take up nation-building activities. Sir M. Visveswaray urges the Indians to rely on self-help. "We should," exhorts he, "make an all-out effort among ourselves for the manufacture of locomotives, automobiles, aeroplanes, engines and ships, of the dying stuff and heavy chemicals."

The Post-war Economic Re-construction Committee was constituted by the Government of India in June 1941. The Committee consists of the following sub-committees, (i) Labour and demobilization, (ii) Disposal and War contracts, (iii) Public work and Government purchases and (iv) Trade, international trade policy and agricultural development. Another step towards this direction was the appointment of a consultative committee of economists drawn from various universities to suggest means of post-war reconstruction. The Commerce member of the Government of India has spoken on the need of an Indian National Research Council so that work may proceed scientifically.

Indians should insist that the goods now supplied to England must be repaid by the goods at some future date. The full benefit of the Lease and Lend policy should be extended to India. But instead of acting according to this equitable principle sterling balances are being earmarked to the account of India. The creditor countries are backward in respect of industrial development and if repayment in money means that these creditors will have to consume more British goods, it will not only mean a slump in the creditor countries but also destroy their industrial effort. There should be an end of economic imperialism.

A plan of economic development for India drawn up by eight eminent men like Birla, Tata, Sir A. Dalal, Sir P. Thakurdas etc. has been placed before the Government of India. This plan which provides for an expenditure of ten thousand crores of rupees is a sort of challenge to official planners. Adequate food, clothing, accommodation and education for every person, a school and a dispensary with a qualified doctor and two nurses in every village and three-fold increase in the per capita income are the goals aimed at. The total expenditure of Rs. 10,000 crores is to be spent over 15 years and in three stages. These nationalist industrialists truly point out that the real capital of a country consists of its resources in materials and manpower. Money is simply a means of mobilising these resources and canalising them into specific forms of activity. The appointment of Sir A. Dalal in the Viceroy's Council raises some expectation in the mind of the Indian nationalists. But everything hangs on the satisfactory solution of the Indian political problem.

THE OLD ORDER CHANGETH YIELDING PLACE TO NEW

Tennyson has sung.

"The old order changeth, yielding place to new ;
And God fulfills Himself in many ways,

Lest one good custom should corrupt the world."

And the poet has uttered an eternal truth. In this world nothing is fixed and certain ; the only thing certain is that everything is uncertain and changing. The wheel of Time

moves on and on. The old dies and out of its ashes is born the new. We ring out the old and ring in the new. Winter goes out and spring comes in. This law not only applies to the biological and material worlds but also to the realms of arts, literature, politics, economics and science etc.

History and Science tell us the story of origin of the world, of the Earth, and of the people who now strut and fret on the stage of the world. Man's rise and growth from Paleolithic age to Neolithic age, then Stone age, and next Copper age etc, is a tale of changing of the old order for the new. In the drama of the world scenes follow scenes, acts follow acts, drama follows drama. Nothing stands still.

Before the French Revolution we had autocrats, despots, tyrants, and monarchs, monarchs who were not figure-heads but whose will was law. With the French Revolution that picture was destroyed. The age of liberty, equality and fraternity came and with it came democracy in politics, Romanticism in English literature, and Protestantism in Christianity. The French Revolution made mighty changes in the old order of things.

Our forefathers deified each object of Nature and worshipped it. That was one order. The order changed and changed. And man is now now longer a helpless toy before the forces of Nature but their proud master. This is another order. The age of alchemy has, after various stages, reached the present state of Chemistry. Perhaps in no other branch of human thought has change been so pronounced, and so frequent as in the world of science. In the beginning of the twentieth century an aeroplane was a wonder but it is now a cold fact. The age of human labour has given place to the age of machine. We know not yet what strange new orders are in store for us. Mr. H. G.

Wells has given us a fanciful idea as to the shape of things to come.

There have been changes of order. But it is not for us here to discuss the question whether the change of the new order is better. The evolutionists will claim that these changes lead man from progress to progress for, the world is a battle ground and the fittest only here survive.

After the last Great World War there have been some mighty changes. Why these changes took place it is not our purpose here to discuss. But they are there. Democracy has yielded in several places to dictatorship. Monarchy has yielded to either constitutional form or democracy in some cases. We have from the age of Czarist Russia to Bolshevik or communistic Russia. Literature is now full of the joys and sorrows of the poor and the so-called wretched. Modern writers take delight in painting pictures of factory life and modern poets sing the glories of the beggars and communism.

At present the different nations now engaged in the Second Great World War are speaking of a "New Order." The old order which meant the state of Europe after the last Great World War must now bid goodbye. Even from behind the smoke-screen of some high sounding economic phrases the object of the German "New Order" becomes crystal clear. The Germans stand for the destruction of the British Empire. Hitler said "God did not make the world for Britishers to enjoy it." Japan also announces that she fights for a new order and it is the principles that Asia should be for the Asiatics and that she stands for co-prosperity and that her noble mission in China is her upliftment. Lest the German and the Japanese propaganda mislead anybody President Roosevelt and Mr. Churchill

made a joint declaration on the coming new order, on August 14, 1941 which is known as the Atlantic Charter. They have announced that they sought no territorial or any other kind of aggression and they would respect the rights of all peoples (why then not of India) to choose their own form of government. Verily, a "New Order" is awaiting us. But what its shape will be, it is difficult to say.

There are thinkers who believe that the future world would be a dark world. It is true it will be one of automobiles, aeroplanes, of electricity and television but all the same there will remain unrest, material greed, and moral degradation. There are men who have dubbed modern science as a false Messiah. Hence there is the cry, "Go back to Nature".

Coming nearer home we had found one order before the advent of the British in this country. And with the contact of the West we had yet another order. When the first glare of Western civilization had faded and India found her soul she had yet another order. At present there are various orders living in one age, side by side—some are living in the medieval ages, some in the nineteenth century and a few in the present age. Though the old order changeth yet some may cling to it and refuse to move. But Time glides on and order undergoes change. The feudal order is no more. The Bourgeoisie order is dying fast and the rule of the Proletariate, if not in an extreme form, in a diluted form, is in sight.

Change is the very condition of life. A child changes to a boy, a boy to a youth and then to a man. The buds change to flowers. Dawn turns to morning, morning to noon and noon to afternoon, and afternoon to night. The wheel of Time moves on and on.

BENGAL FAMINE, 1943

Oh ! God ! that bread should be so dear,
And flesh and blood so cheap !

Famines are not unknown in British India. But the famine which kindly visited some parts of India like Behar and Orissa, Madras and particularly Bengal has perhaps eclipsed all past records in horror and terror. In these days of science and civilization, of improved communication, better economic organization, famines are preventable and are practically unknown in civilized world. But the tale of India in bondage is different. Indeed, when a famine is made by man nobody can help. Wordsworth rightly said, "Man's inhumanity to man makes countless thousands mourn".

With the flames of war extending to the border of Bengal, she has been groaning under various grievances. Since May 1943 the price of rice began to rise sharply and rice became scarce. A country-wide anti-hoarding drive ended in a fiasco. The diagnosis was wrong and the disease turned from bad to worse inspite of the doctors' best aid. Government however was not idle. The first Price Control Conference sat as early as the 19th October 1939. Several food grains control orders, Grow More Food campaign showed government's concern for India's food front. But it was an evil day for Bengal when her Governor the late Sir John Herbert pursued the rice-denial policy.

The situation in Bengal sank and sank. And the food position came to a crisis in July 1943. Rice was being sold at Rs. 110/- per maund. Thousands of human skeletons now began to roam through the streets of Calcutta for a morsel of food. Hungry mothers, clad in rags, were knocking at the doors of the citizens for food. The crying child

could only sob. Dead bodies lay scattered on the rich pavements of the second city of the British empire. The condition in the villages was worse. The All-India social workers came down to Bengal to see things for themselves. Pandit H. N. Kunzru, President of Servants of India Society, Mrs. Rajan Nehru, Secretary All-India Women's Conference, Mrs. Vijaylakshmi Pandit made extensive tours throughout Bengal. The harrowing details of the famine they published touched the heart of the rich. And every body came forward to help Bengal in her dire distress.

Near the dustbins in Calcutta were now found half-starved women and children hunting in the filth for a morsel of food. "The description of life in Calcutta," wrote the New Statesman, London, "read like extracts from some medieval chronicle of the black-death". When a man is half-starved loyalty passes, friendship breaks and discipline bursts like a bubble. The situation was greatly aggravated by the efforts of higher authorities to stifle the groan of hunger and the news of famine was suppressed.

As soon as the news of Bengal's plight reached the ears of the world donations of money and food-stuffs flowed into the province from different parts of India and out-side. The government of Bengal spent 11½ crores of rupees to relieve the famine distress and made also relief provisions for 1944. Splendid was the service rendered by non-official relief organizations. Free kitchens, Free milk canteens, cheap *parota* shops, free dole centres, medical centres were opened and maintained by various relief associations chief of which are Bengal Relief Committee, Marwari Relief Society and Ramkrishna Mission. But it is very difficult to undo a mischief already done. And inspite of the best endeavours of all, thousands of people died in tragic circum-

tances. As to the number of death due to famine there is a dispute. The Secretary of State for India says it is one million souls while the non-official figure is $3\frac{1}{2}$ millions.

The Food minister of the Bengal Government gave twelve reasons for this terrible tragedy. First of all there were failures of *Aus* crop in 1942 and *Aman* crop in 1942-43. The havoc caused in Midnapore and 24 Parganas by the Cyclone and destruction of paddy by pests were not negligible. The boat-denial policy and the evacuation of the coastal areas were important factors. Moreover the refugees from Burma and the influx of population like the military added to the food problem. Then there were construction work of various types and shortage of normal imports and profiteering. Above all, there was the loss of Burma and no attempt was made to make good the loss of Burma rice.

As soon as Viscount Wavell took up the reins of government, things began to move fast. His vigorous measures and personal interests shook off the apathy of the local authorities. An ordinance was passed to take hunger victims to rest camps. In relief measures the Viceroy invoked the aid of the military. The government of India took charge of food. Rationing has been introduced in cities and industrial areas. A food plan for 1944 was accepted. The prices of rice and the articles of food and necessity have been controlled. And the situation improved by and by.

But in the wake of the famine come many problems. The famine-stricken sold properties, deserted homes, lost utensils. Diseases like malaria and dysentery are playing havoc. Medicines are not easily available. Many young women and girls have been forced to live a life of shame. Parents have been separated from children. Herein lies the importance of re-construction.

A battle royal has been fought as to the responsibility of this famine. A Royal Commission has been appointed with Sir John Woodhead as chairman to enquire into the matter. Sir J. P. Srivastava, the Food member of the Viceroy's Council said, "The fact of the matter is that we have all erred and the main thing now for us is to get together and do all we can". The Calcutta Statesman has said "The personages in New Delhi, in Calcutta and in Whitehall at the top are jointly responsible. There has been shared Indo-British inefficiency which disgraces both parties". But the British vested interests have quickly seized upon the famine-condition in India as an illustration of the incapacity of Indians to manage their own affairs.

WAR AND WOMAN

War means horror and terror, bloodshed and man-slaughter ; it is murder and rapine, massacre of infants and babes ; it is the demon of barbarity which emerges with unconcealed fangs and teeth to tear up the world ; it is the dance of death. It seems clear that women, soft by nature and sweet by temperament, are not fit for any kind of war service. War is a man's concern, why should a woman take part in it ? She is taught, "Man for the sword, and for the needle she." Why then should she be dragged out of her home, and be employed in the noble game of shooting men and women ?

But when a war breaks out, the whole country is stirred to its depth. Nobody in the realm can afford to remain idle. Everybody must take part in some sort of

activities in furtherance of the purpose of war. He or she who does not do so, is regarded as an enemy of the country. War is a period of national travail, sorrow and suffering. It calls forth all the national resources of a country to fight the enemy, and a nation's half, the female folk can no longer remain busy with "the needle," if she realizes fully that her fate is bound with that of her brother. She feels that the result of a war affects her as much as it does her brother. She appreciates that her lot is cast with that of her brother. Rightly or wrongly when a country is plunged in war, its women folk must take their share, and shoulder the responsibility. When a house is set on fire, it is no argument for a woman to say that it is the clear duty of menfolk to put fire, and remain herself in her sofa with a novel in her hand. Necessity knows no law, respects no custom and honours no etiquette.

Yes, generally speaking she is not fit for any hard work, a work which demands a strong masculine nerve. But there are men among women, and women among men. So the mere sex is not the determining factor. As for an average woman, her services may not be employed to bomb an enemy dock, or to torpedo an enemy ship. She has her duties in other spheres, duties as important as of those serving in the fronts. A Joan of Arch is seldom born. There are few Amy Johnsons. But these are exceptional cases.

Indian women are playing an active part in the present war. Indian women are being recruited in the Women's Auxiliary Force WAF (I) to take up semi-military work by the side of the armed forces. Lady Carlisle, the present head of the Force is determined to popularise it and recruit women in a large number.

But various are the ways in which an average woman can play her glorious part in war-effort. It is true that a large number of people is required to fight in the front, but it is equally true that a larger number of people is required in various defence services, and in ministering to the needs of those who are engaged in fighting. Since the days of Florence Nightingale the services rendered by women nurse in war-fields are unique. Women members of the Red Cross Society, Ambulance Unit save many a wounded soldier from the jaws of death.

If her services in the field are unique, her services in the defence work are equally important. From an observatory-post she spots an enemy plane, and signals its approach to the defence workers in the city and sirens begin to sing often with the anti-air-craft-gun fire in chorus. She it is who renders first-aid to the injured in an air-raid. She it is who serves in the Rescue party and trims hedges here and there. She it is who clears up, along with the males, the debris of the bombed buildings, and fights fire. She is in charge of the custody and care of the gas preventive equipment. Along with her brother, she studies the marks of identification of a plane, and determines its character,—friend or foe. She has her services in factories of production as well. She also cleans an engine and fits up a machine along with her brother.

No less important are her services at home. She is in charge of the children, children rendered homeless, children turned orphans—the future of the nation. When a pilot alights from his plane after bombing an enemy land, she welcomes him and takes off his kit, and looks to his comfort. When a pilot boards a plane, and starts on his mission to pound an enemy dock, she cheers him up, and makes

him forget the terrors of death. In food and cloth rationing she serves as clerk,, and a controller.

War is a drain on man-power. When men are away much of the duties previously performed by them falls on the shoulders of the fair sex. In her response to the call of the nation—in her power of adaptation to such a life of hardship and difficulty much of the fate of war hangs. Performance of these duties by womenfolk relieves male man-power, and releases all men of fighting age to take up duties calling forth harder labour.

Madam Chiang Kai-shek in course of her clarion call to the women of China, at the present grave hour of their national peril, says, "while during war-time the men are the fighters, it is the women who bear the brunt of carrying on it at the rear. We must encourage the men and let them know that we are just as ready to give up everything, even our lives to support our fighters at the front."

A woman is, "A ministering angel,"

"When pain and anguish wring the brow of man,"

Adam cannot march in the battle of life without Eve by her side for, the man's cause is as well the woman's and men and women rise and sink together.

IDEAL OF INDIAN WOMANHOOD

In these days of the spread of English education, in these days when a man falls an easy victim to the glare of Western civilization, it is necessary to remember that we have our ideas and ideals, ideas and ideals which have outlived many a social and political revolution, ideas and ideals which have successfully withstood the onslaughts of

foreign, political and cultural conquests. There is an idea in some quarters that everything British is good and scientific, while everything Indian is bad and archaic that we should worship all that is British and should learn to hate all that is Indian. The above remarks apply with a great force in the case of our ideal of womanhood.

Some labour under the impression that Indian ideal of womanhood is the picture of a woman who always wears a veil, remains within doors, never talks with a male stranger, worships her husband as a god etc. This is only a caricature of our womanhood.

It is true the ideal varies from age to age. In the age of the *Vedas* and the *Puranas* we had one type, in the age of the Muslims we had yet another type. But behind these types, behind the differences in dress, manners and customs there are some fundamental ideas which stand out. The picture of womanhood that we have in our land from time immemorial, the picture embalmed in our ancient literature, in our history, drama, poetry and ballads is something unique. We have the ideal in *Sita* who is the symbol of silent suffering for the sake of her husband. We have the ideal in *Sati* who, unable to brook the insult of her husband by her father, gave up the ghost. We have the ideal in *Sabitri* whose devotion to her husband brought back her dead husband to life. As there is no *Ramchandra* now so there cannot be any *Sita*. Men cannot ask women to be *Sitas* when they themselves are not *Ram Chandras*.

If these are examples of conjugal love, there were *Maitrayee*, *Lilabati* and *Khana* etc, conspicuous in the world of scholarship. This gives the lie direct to those who say and preach that before the advent of the English the women in India were never educated. In the assem-

bly of great scholars *Gargi* debated with the great sage *Yajñabalkya* on philosophy and religion. This shows how even in those days of antiquity women came out of doors and participate in learned discussions with male scholars. *Anusuya* and *Priyambada* did not take to their heels, with veils on, at the sight of the king *Dushmanta*. The free and easy way of their talk with the king shows how accustomed they were to talk with the male strangers. In bravery and heroism we have *Rani Durgabati*, *Lakshmi Bai* and *Chand Sultana* etc. This shows that Indian women knew also how to fight and govern, when the circumstances so demanded. It is very easy to multiply instances.

From the above examples it is not difficult to find certain virtues, virtues not fetters artificially forged by male folk to perpetuate the masculine rule over the feminine, virtues which are unparalleled in the history of humanity. The foremost of these virtues are her spiritual outlook and her spirit of renunciation. Home is the centre round which her every activity revolves. Her devotion to duty, her self-less service to home and humanity, her sacred regard for marriage ties have no parallel in world's history. A Miss Mayo may find fault here and there. When our *Sita* leaves the life of ease and luxury and follows her husband, *Ramchandra* in his exile and smilingly shares his sorrows, her sister in some other part of the world would, in similar circumstances, seek a divorce and marry another person and enjoy life. It is renunciation and not enjoyment which constitutes the glory of Indian womanhood. She is ever "true to the kindred points of Heaven and home." Indian womanhood looks more to the spirit than to the body, looks more to the

heart than to the dress. In language of superb, poetical beauty Mrs. Sarojini Naidu has given expression to this aspect of Indian womanhood in her *Kamala* lectures delivered at the Calcutta University.

It is said that the conception of woman as a partner of man is something new in our land and has been imported into this country from Europe. Nothing is farther from truth than this. When *Sita* was carried off by *Ravana*, *Ramchandra* overwhelmed with grief, told *Lakshmana* that *Sita* was like his mother in affection, minister in counsel and playmate in frolic and fun. This conception of a wife as a friend, philosopher and guide to man, sharing his joys and sorrows, smiles and tears is truly Indian and is as old as the Himalayas. When *Chitrangada* says that she is not a deity to be worshipped by her husband, nor to be looked down upon as a slave woman but only an equal partner she voices the true feelings of Indian womanhood.

In these days when there is a tendency, nay a temptation to break away from the moorings of our own civilization, it is essential that we should declare our faith in our own ideal and follow it. Let East and West meet. But this does not mean that East should sacrifice her everything and accept anything Western. An ultra-modern Bengali girl, with a zero power spectacles on, lips and cheeks artificially reddened, hair bobbed, with a cigarette in her right hand and a ladies' bag in her left, coming out of Firpo's Restaurant with a gentleman friend, denouncing motherhood, and talking loosely on the superiority of European dance now in English then breaking in Hindi but never in Bengali, is a strange specimen of English imitation brand Indian womanhood. It is

true that they are meant for those England-returned Indians who would prefer the company of an Indian girl, should she possess all that is found in a European girl. This perverse type does exist. This should not however blind our vision and rob our judgment. We should keep before our mind the words of Swami Vivekanda, 'India, thou must not forget thy ideal of womanhood such as *Sita, Sabitri and Damayanti*' and follow the examples with modifications necessitated by time.

NATIONALISM AND INTERNATIONALISM

In the realm of thoughts there are conflicting ideas and theories. Thus democracy fights dictatorship ; communism battles with Fascism. Similarly nationalism comes into conflict with internationalism. This ideological conflict is not always confined to the four corners of an academy.

Nationalism is the direct outcome of the deliberate consciousness and effort to be free from dependency as in the case of our India or to be dominant and powerful as in the case of Italy, Germany and Japan. The identity of race, language, religion, tradition and history are the bonds of nationality. These influences create a sense of unity that bind individuals into a nationality. Such a population, other things being equal, tends to form a state, and the strength of a state depends in a large degree upon its unity. The men of the same nationality are not necessarily men of the same state. In a dependent state like India which consists people of divergent races, religions and languages the object of nationalism is to throw off the British yoke.

Self-respect, exhilaration, and creativeness all these seem to be definite outcome of self-government.

Political nation-hood is a comparatively recent phenomenon in the annals of human history. It is the result of a certain stage of economic development affecting communities inhabiting a certain geographical region. Diverse groups of peoples living in similar surroundings are gradually welded into a national entity under the pressure of economic forces. The French Revolution destroyed the absolutism of France and its doctrine, "Men are born free and equal in rights"—advanced the cause of nationalism. Indeed, it is a heritage of the French Revolution.

With the phenomenal progress of science, with the facility of communications, with the closer understanding between man and man, nations have come together, not for what they can get out of each other, but for what they can be to each other. Not only East and West have met, but East, West, North and South have met. The family of nations thus established appreciates each other and forms not a league of nations but a Family of humanity. Colour of skin, language, nationality are matters which do not sway the considerations of the kinship of the race. The theory of internationalism looking to the world as a family of humanity has been preached by different thinkers in different ways. Thus the doctrine of Engels and Marx is that this world is for the workers and the workers are the comrades of one another. Whatever may be his name, a worker is a brother of a worker and for him there is no race, no nationality.

In the World Brotherhood Congress it has been held that if men are to live together at all in this crowded earth, it is necessary that these human relations must be adjusted

on the basis of justice and brotherhood. It means the cultivation and growth of an international mind that leads men of each race to love and trust all others.

Nationalism comes from patriotism. But patriotism is not enough. It has wrought great things and produced some beneficent results. It is parochial. It fosters narrowness, bigotry, greed and hatred. Nationalism lays importance to self-sufficiency. Egoism in national states bodes ill for man. Nation-states yearn to be strong. It seeks security from external aggression and the problem of armaments and strategic frontiers come forward. Next, it seeks outlets of surplus population which requires colonization. The colonies supply raw materials and buy finished goods. Herein lies their utility. The merchants of the nation-states are anxious to win markets. As power extends, nationalism becomes transformed into imperialism. "The nationalism", says Prof. Burns, "which was the ideal of small oppressed or divided races has become identified with imperialism when the nation has secured its position." According to Prof. Hobson imperialism is the perversion of the nature and purpose of nationalism. Aggressive nationalism as exhibited in Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy, and militarist Japan is a danger to world peace and menace to civilization.

Against the possible evils of nationalism stands internationalism. It may be asked how internationalism can protect justice and peace of the world. The answer is not hard to give. It can stop world evils by disarmament, by distribution of the scientific inventions for the good of the world and by world currency stability. Through interchange of world famous scholars, it can help a good deal in the cause of education.

Nationalism is good but inter-nationalism is better. If a state follows the principles of nationalism while its neighbouring state pursues internationalism they must come into conflict in no time and the latter might go down fighting. If nationalism is confined to certain limits and does not become aggressive, it is well and good.

In the present Second Great World War we know not yet whether aggressive nationalism will come out victorious resulting in imperialism, perhaps of a new complexion, or it will be crushed, and out of its ashes will emerge inter-nationalism in its full glory.

COMMUNISM

We live in a world of thoughts. Never before in the history of man there were so many—"isms" as at present. Nazism, Fascism, Bolshevism, Gandhism, Communism not only perplex a man of the street, but also scholars. For a long while the spectre of communism, grim, gaunt and severe has been haunting the world. Much ink has been spoilt on it. There are people who are up against it; there are people who consider it to be the panacea for all the ills of the world and there are others who laugh at it and take it as one of the many bubbles on the ocean of time.

According to communism the history of all existing society is a struggle between bourgeoisie and proletariat, the oppressor and the oppressed. By bourgeoisie is meant the class of modern capitalists, owners of the means of social production and employers of wage-labourer. By proletariat is meant the class of modern wage labourers

who, having no means of production of their own, are reduced to selling their labour power in order to live.

Communism believes that the bourgeoisie "has drowned the most heavenly ecstasies of religious fervour, has resolved personal worth into exchange value." It has stripped of its halo in every occupation hitherto honoured ; it has converted the physician, the lawyer, the priest, the poet, the man of science into its paid wage labourer. It has torn away from the family its sentimental veil and has reduced the family relation to a mere money relation. The need of a constantly expanding market for its products chases the bourgeoisie over the whole surface of the globe. It must nestle everywhere, and settle everywhere. In places of old wants we find new, requiring for their satisfaction new products. And as is the case in material, so is also in intellectual production. The cheap prices of its commodities are the heavy artillery with which it battles down all Chinese walls. It has created enormous cities, has subjected the country to the rule of the towns, subjected the East to the West.

The weapons with which the bourgeoisie fought feudalism are now turned against itself. It has called into existence the modern working class, the proletarians. Owing to the extensive use of the machinery the work of the proletarians has lost all individual character. The manufacturer exploits the labourer and the labourer receives some wages but he is then exploited by the land-lord, the shop-keeper etc. The workers form combinations (Trade Union) ; they set factories ablaze ; they seek to restore by force their vanished middle ages status. Here and there the contest breaks out into riots. The modern labourer instead of rising with the progress of industry sinks deeper

and deeper below the conditions of existence of his own class. He becomes a pauper and pauperism develops more rapidly than population and wealth.

The communists do not form a separate party opposed to the other working class parties. The communists point out and bring to the front the common interests of the entire proletariat independently of all nationalities. They constitute the most advanced and resolute section of the working class parties of every country. The immediate aims of them are the formation of the proletariat into a class, overthrow of the bourgeoisie supremacy and capture of political power by the proletariat. The distinguishing feature of communism is not the abolition of property generally but the abolition of bourgeoisie property. All that the communists want to do away with is the miserable character of appropriation under which the labourer lives merely to increase capital. In communist society accumulated labour is but a means to promote existence of the labour. It does not deprive any man of the power to appropriate the products of society. Communists openly declare that their ends can be attained only by the forcible overthrow of all existing social conditions. To win the battle of democracy they want to raise the proletariat to the position of the ruling class. Nazi Germany is now engaged in a titanic struggle with Bolshevik Russia. There is an apprehension that if Russia comes out victorious, she may communise or Bolshevise Europe. This question was put to Sir Stafford Cripps at Bristol on his return from Moscow. His reply was that "The Soviet Government have no desire to interfere in any way with the other Governments of the world". But with the victorious march of Russia against Nazi-Germany in Europe some

capitalistic democracies are nervous that Russia would play a prominent part in the post-war world, should the allies be victorious. And Russia may spread her influence in the political as well as in the thought-world of Europe. A triumph of Russia is a victory of her political thought.

But we must not be blind to the defects of Communism. It abolishes some of the eternal truths of man and society ; it abolishes all religion, all morality ; it acts in contradiction to all past historical experiences. The quintessence of communism has been the Holy Grail of human aspirations, and in its vain quest, humanity has been lost in the quackmire of hypocrisy and deceit. It is true, man's views, ideas and conceptions, in one word, man's consciousness changes with every change in the conditions of his life. It is true that the old order changeth, yielding place to new, but God only knows whether the present order would change at all, and if so, to communistic order.

THE PROBLEM OF OUR SECONDARY EDUCATION

Secondary education relates to that period of training which begins with the end of Primary education and ends with the commencement of College education. It is pre-college education except the period passed in the primary stage. This is education at the most critical period of the nation's future generation.

It is a wellknown fact that Secondary educational ideas underwent a radical change after the last Great World War. The European schools adopted one third vocational instruction with two-third academic studies in their school

curriculum. It is necessary in our country too that Secondary education should not be made wholesale literary. It must have some sort of technical education so that the students can find out some means of their livelihood. This technical education too should not be the goal of secondary education. It should only be a supplement to the general education and it should lead other students to their higher education.

The medium of Secondary education must be the mother tongue. Without the mother tongue education imparted is futile. Education with foreign tongue has no relation with national life. The foreign tongue as a medium takes a lot of our time, causes waste of energy, befogs the brain and saps our vitality.

We must keep before our mind the purposes of which Secondary education is imparted. It is for the initiation of the pupils into the elements of common culture of the nation and for differentiation of them according to the development of their individual aptitude, interests and capacities. The educationists must keep an eye, at this critical period of life, the characteristics of adolescence and the individual differences in mental, physical and emotional development in youth. It is the period when individual aptitude of the children is formed. It is the period when the mind flowers and the brain develops.

For some time past the question of Secondary education has been engaging the attention of the educational authorities in Bengal. At present Secondary education in Bengal is under a dual control. The control is divided between the authorities of the Calcutta University and the Department of Education of the Government of Bengal. The Calcutta University holds and conducts the Matriculation examina-

tion, prescribes texts for the said examination and affiliates the Secondary schools. The Department of Education sanctions grants-in-aid to the private schools. It awards scholarships, supervises the schools through its Inspectorate, prescribes and selects text books for all classes except for first and second classes through its Text Book Committee.

But it so happens that the two authorities often come into conflict. The Director of Public Instruction may, on the recommendation of an Inspector of Schools, advise the authorities of the Calcutta University to discontinue its affiliation say, on some political grounds. But the authorities of the Calcutta University may, on hearing what the school authorities might say in the matter, turn a deaf ear to the recommendation of the Director and he may fret and fume in his room in the Secretariat. The Calcutta University may declare a student to be first among the successful students of Matriculation Examination but the Director of Public Instruction may, on enquiry, withhold the scholarship to which he is otherwise entitled. Thus this divided control leads to various difficulties, internal as well as external. To remedy these defects of the present arrangement there has been a proposal to constitute a Board for the control of Secondary Education.

With this object in view, apparently as it will subsequently appear, a Bill for "the better management" of Secondary education in Bengal was introduced in 1940 by the so-called Coalition Ministry of Bengal. The Bill was condemned most vehemently in the Press and on the platform. Distinguished educationists poured down most scathing criticisms of the measure. The protest grew in volume and intensity as the Ministry displayed grim determination to push it through in the teeth of the wholesale Hindu opposition. Never

before the Hindu Bengal rose to a man as on this occasion to fight the Bill.

The late Sir M. N. Mookherji, not a young political firebrand but an ex-Chief Justice of Calcutta High Court, spoke on the Bill in the following terms :—"The object of the Bill seems to be to Moslemize education in Bengal, to financially cripple the Calcutta University without any corresponding financial compensation and the inevitable consequence will be that secondary education will not be improved but that higher education will receive a death-blow. Nothing is further from the Bill than a constructive scheme for the improvement of secondary education. The whole fabric is a desolate picture."

About 3200 delegates from the educational institutions all over Bengal and about 10,000 people assembled at Hazra Park, Calcutta with the late Sir P. C. Ray in the chair to protest against the measure and to give expression to the sense of injury caused by the attack on the cultural life of Bengal. The bill made the interests of education subservient to political and communal considerations and completely ignored the academic and cultural points of view. The present Bill 1944 has been designed to officialise Secondary education. It aims at stifling private enterprises. It makes no provision for technical, vocational and agricultural education. The constitution of the Board is based solely on communal considerations.

Let the authorities remember that nearly 3000 secondary schools owe their existence and continuance to the Hindus and more than 70% of the students of secondary schools are the Hindus. Any system of education which does not therefore take into account the feelings, sentiments and the culture of the Hindus is bound to provoke opposition from them.

INFLATION IN INDIA

Inflation is a technical term in Economics. But through the grace of the present war everybody now understands it. Everybody has more money in his pocket than he had before the war. If we cast a glance at a Rickshaw puller's bag we will find several one rupee notes. Before the war however he could show only small coins worth not more than a rupee. We have more money but we are more in want. Money in itself has no value. Money has value because it can give us goods and commodities. When with a reasonable amount of money we do not get a reasonable quantity of goods we have inflation. Inflation means abnormal increase of the currency by the issue of inconvertible legal tender notes. The purchasing power of money has gone down. The cost of living has gone up by about three hundred per cent.

The inflation problem in India looms large in political and economic horizons. The food crisis that has been passing over our country has focussed our attention to this problem. Various causes have been ascribed and various remedies have been suggested by the experts. When there is a disease in our political, social or economic life the doctors are plentiful. But it is one thing to contract a disease and then call for a doctor. And it is another thing not to call in a doctor. Unless and until there is a national government with powers over the national purse all these measures have no great effect on our economic structure.

Now let us take the causes of inflation in India. Currency note circulation in India increased from Rs. 170 crores in August 1939 to about Rs. 763 crores in October 1943. Then with the entry of America and Japan in the

war-arena India became a war-base. Thus vast purchases are to be made in India by the Allies. The construction of roads, aerodromes, camps etc. with large number of labourers and engineers required a huge amount of money which necessitated expansion of currency notes.

This was a golden opportunity for the speculators with their idle money lying at banks and they readily seized it. They made large profits when the prices of commodities were looking up. This hoarding goods instead of hoarding money brought the mischievous forces of inflation in the market. Thus the gap between money and goods became wider and wider and the prices rose higher and higher.

The increases in wages, dearness allowance etc. aggravated the inflatory tendencies still further. Hoarding and profiteering added fat to the fire. Then again the services rendered by the government of India to the British Government and the United nations have resulted in a large favourable balance of accounts leading to accumulation of sterling funds in London. This has enabled the India Government to pay off the sterling liabilities in London but their rupee-counter-parts have not been taken over by the Indian investors to any appreciable extent. The result has been that the Government of India have been obliged to issue rupees against sterling balances to a greater extent.

Inspite of posters, placards and pamphlets Government have failed to attract people's money towards Defence Bonds, National Savings Certificates, War Loans etc. Government at long last have issued Prize Bonds. This has also stimulated inflation.

Various suggestions and measures have been devised to combat the evil of inflation. The best solution is the increase in the supply of output, both agricultural and

industrial. This cannot be carried out for lack of machines and appliances. Again wages should not be raised beyond the level of actual prices. Taxation at a higher rate may help and now excess profits and surcharges are being realized. To popularize different Bonds loans out of them should be allowed. The growth of mushroom companies, companies born only to reap the war-harvest has been stopped. With a view to equalize demand with supply price control and rationing have been introduced.

Price control without rationing is disastrous as it appeared from the Bengal Famine in 1943. "The inflatory problem," says Lord Wavell, "is incapable of solution, if food is not subjected to effective control for, food affects the whole structure of our economy. It will profit a man nothing to gain large increments by forcing up prices and thereby causing inflation, since the value of his gains will be thereby reduced and he may cause untold misery to others".

Sir James Talor, Governor of Reserve Bank of India however thinks that there has been no inflation in India. Mr. G. D. Birla in his booklet "Inflation or Scarcity" has shown that the real problem is not inflation but scarcity of goods. Hence no amount of currency depletion or control of prices or rationing or enforced saving or freezing of income will solve the problem of dearness. The solution, according to him, lies in more production and more consumption on the part of the public. But it also appears that inspite of introduction of some of these measures there is inflation in India. It appears also that the right remedy has not yet been applied. A young Indian may be pardoned, in the circumstances, if he thinks that without the strings of the national purse in the hands of the nationalists the evil of inflation will remain.

DANCING

Man is not all intellect ; he is emotional as well. He expresses his emotions in some form or other and dancing was one of the earliest forms he chose. Thus the art of dancing is perhaps as old as man. Architecture, sculpture, painting, poetry and music all require some development of thought in him and some refinement of feeling. But dancing could be easily resorted to even by the primitive man whenever he could not contain his joy or sorrow. Dancing is the expression of Life's urge. It stands at the source of all the arts that express themselves in the human person. It is the primitive and ultimate means of expression and communication and it is spontaneous in its form.

With the growth of civilization the art grew rapidly not only in the sense that it became capable of expressing a larger range of emotions and thoughts but also in the sense that its forms and modes became more complex. Thus with the evolution of the life of man the dance developed into a finer and deeper art of expression and communication. The different forms began to vary according to time and place reflecting the social conditions and feelings out of which they grew and on which they fed.

The origin of Indian dance is traced mythologically to Lord Siva, the *Nataraj*. Indian dancing utilizes the feet, the hands, the fingers, the eyes and in fact every limb of the body while the Western dancing depends mainly upon the use of the feet and legs.

In India itself dancing is not of the same variety all over but it follows fundamentally the principles of Bharata's *Natya Shastra*. It had its origin in the beginning with Religion. But it gradually became secular in

industrial. This cannot be carried out for lack of machines and appliances. Again wages should not be raised beyond the level of actual prices. Taxation at a higher rate may help and now excess profits and surcharges are being realized. To popularize different Bonds loans out of them should be allowed. The growth of mushroom companies, companies born only to reap the war-harvest has been stopped. With a view to equalize demand with supply price control and rationing have been introduced.

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aim and was content seeking the patronage of the kings and the learned in course of time. This was the hey-day of Indian dance.

Then came a period of eclipse. The art degenerated and it was left practically to the tender care of those who lived on the sham and mockery of perverted religion. It drifted and drifted without the proper guide. The women who practised it did it, not as an art but as an artifice, to maintain themselves. This state of affairs continued for some time. But after the darkness of night come the rosy lights of the morning sun. Different art schools sprang up and a sincere attempt was made to revive it, in its original glory, with modifications necessitated by time. Dr. Rabindra Nath Tagore was one of the earliest to popularise the art in its best and purest form.

Dancing may be classified under three heads, First, rhythmic movement of the body in consonance with a background of music. The second type is the one in which muscular and physical movements take a subordinate place and facial and other expressions depicting the emotions come into prominence. The third type is that which is known in the west as "Ballet dancing". The exponent here narrates a story with gestures and poses. The ordinary dance known as *nautch* is of the second type. The *Kathakali* dance of Malabar corresponds to the third type. The "Chhau" dance of Seraikela is an important variety of Indian dance. It is so called because all the dancers wear the mask or "Chhau". Sometime back the *Kathakali* dance of Malabar also used the mask. But paint has now taken the place of it.

Ragini Devi, an American lady has popularized the *kathakali*. Mrs. Rukshmini Devi, wife of Dr. G. S.

Arúndale, President of Theosophical Society is another able exponent of Indian dance. Her dances illustrated in *Mudras* appeal more to the spirit than to the mind, more to the soul than to the body. They open out the soul's caged door and permit us a peep into the mystery of the invisible world. Uday Shanker is another talented exponent of Indian dance. His dance school at Almora attracts many artists and lovers of Indian culture. Mrs. Sadhona Bose is another artist in Indian dance and her performances on the stage and the screen elicit the applause of the public.

We go to a dance performance to relax our jaded nerves, to witness the purple expositions of the sexy stuff and for its the musical caterings. We are apt to talk lightly and think loosely on dancing. We forget that the cultural heritage of the glorious ancient India lies hidden in it. Besides the aesthetic and cultural value, dances help to acquire poise, muscular co-ordination and good health.

FOOD RATIONING

War is a monster of cruelty. And its cruel nature is being revealed day by day. In a period of war individual comforts and luxuries, needs and necessities are curtailed. War puts a stop to the normal supply of commodities. War cuts Railways and sea-lines of communication. When the supply of commodities becomes very limited but the demand remains the same the prices go up. The people cannot buy their articles of food etc. The prices go even beyond the reach of the rich. The poor die for want of food. The middle class people remain satisfied with starvation diet. The rich live a life of hardship for lack of comforts and luxuries. This is not a happy state of affairs.

The state now interferes. If the economic forces of demand and supply were left to themselves, chaos and confusion would prevail. Thus the prices of articles of food and necessities are fixed by Government. Anybody selling and buying an article except at the rate fixed by government is punished. But experience teaches us that the price control without food rationing and other economic measures is fruitless.

In food rationing the Government fixes the quantity of food available per head and determines its price. Nobody is allowed to purchase more than his quota ; nobody is permitted to hoard, nobody is given the liberty to move with food-grains from place to place. This is indeed a great hardship. The glutton may groan under various grievances. The rickshaw puller cannot be expected to be happy with that quantity of food which satisfies a dyspeptic Bengali Babu. The Bengali Babu with coarse rice contracts chronic dyspepsia.

• The food rationing is a war emergency measure and lasts during the period of war or during the period of shortage of food. This measure necessarily involves sacrifices. The rich forego their comforts and luxuries. The middlemen groan and grumble. The poor cry, weep and sob. But they forget the misery which would have visited them, had there been no food rationing. Indeed the famine in India, particularly in Bengal focussed the attention of the authorities to food-rationing.

With the fire of war burning all around the Government of India realized the importance of food. A number of food conferences took place. Sir Theodore Gregory in his Report suggested among other things "food rationing". And urban rationing and control of major food grains were announced by Government in October 1943.

Food rationing is not free from defects. In spite of the best enveavours of the authorities there is the black-market, the market where a person may have articles of food at a fancy price. Without the sincere co-operation of the people any government measure which interferes with their private rights cannot be successful. The law, the police baton cannot always find out the law breaker particularly when the people screen the offender. What is necessary is a sense of civic responsibility which will not permit such a state of affairs.

Commenting on the food position, Sir Purshottamdas Thakurdas, a member of the Food Grains Committee has observed that the problem is primarily and predominantly one of supplies and then of effectively distributing them. Rationing without supplies has been a failure. The people here are so sceptic about controls that they widely believe that prices have been fixed for the government and their

agents to make their purchases at the lowest possible rate, leaving the people at the mercy of the black market.

Prof. H. K. Sen also observes that rationing or price-control before obtaining physical control over a substantial part of the foodstuffs or upon the distributing agencies is like putting the cart before the horse.

As a war measure the people are expected to put up with the hardship of food-rationing. But there are certain palpable defects which stand improvement. As regards the quantity of rice sanctioned per head we may point out that it is insufficient for a manual worker or a day labourer. The quota may be raised so far as these people are concerned. As regards the quality of rice we may say that a multi-millionaire is not expected to cultivate overnight the habit of taking the kind of coarse rice often available at the ration shops. If a qualitative difference is made in rice supplied, it would be better for all. In the present system the rich are driven to patronise the black-market or to live on a kind of rice which would surely result in disease and death. Then again people may be granted a certain quantity of rice etc. to meet the domestic emergency, that is to say, for the entertainment of the accidental guests in the house. If these suggestions are carried out the black market may die a natural death.

INSURANCE

The world is out to crush man and his property. Man struggles with the hostile forces and survives. It seems that life is an accident and man lives only by chance. But we mortal men often labour under the impression that we are immortal. As a matter of fact in the midst of life we are in death. We know not when, where and how the hand of Death will fall on us or take away our property. Unexpected death, unexpected loss of property set everything in chaos. It is to prevent this family chaos, it is to protect the children, that human ingenuity has devised insurance. Accident thus being a condition of life and property, man has found out a plan which minimises man's miseries due to such accidents. Accidents we cannot avoid but we can reduce its bitterness. Insurance is the means which reduces human miseries, removes human tears, drives out human care, worry and anxiety.

We live not for us but for others as well. It is the happiness of our near and dear ones which we aim at, and indeed, for which we "earn our bread by the sweat of our brow." The children are to be educated. The daughters are to be married. The wife is to be maintained. We are anxious to stay in this world for the safety, security and happiness of the members of our family. But everybody thinks life to be more full of accidents than it really is. There is a big gap between accidents actually taking place and accidents we expect to take place. It is here that Insurance thrives as an economic organization.

In 1762 a Society was founded which charged premiums according to age and issued policies against the risk of death whenever it occurred. It is upon these beginnings that

modern life assurance has grown and developed. And now Insurance offices of different varieties exist throughout the world. Insurance is of different kinds. But of all kinds the most important is life insurance. There are insurances against risk of fire, personal injury, ruin and damage to buildings. There are again marine insurance, motor car, motor-cycle, aircraft insurances. There may be insurances against earthquake, riot, flood which however Indian companies do not accept. A female dancer in Europe insures her toe and a film-star her eyes. The foot-ball players of the Mohan Bagan are insured against personal accident during play time.

No educated man need any lecture on the utility of insurance. But the mass in our country is still apathetic. The ordinary people doubt the scheme, and suspect the insurance agents. There were cases in our country where the insurance agents turned out to be cheats and insurance companies no better. But those days are gone. Now the Government of India, since the passing of the Insurance Act 1938, have an eye on the affairs of the companies. The Government control has inspired the confidence of the people to these companies. There are about three hundred Insurance companies in India of which about one hundred are foreign. But the needs of educated India are more.

There stands a beautiful house and an English dog and an up-country Darwan are at its gate. A Bengali Babu in European costume goes in with a cigar in his hand. The Darwan salutes; the dog wags its tail. Two servants and two maid servants look after his only son. Everything is happy. Death however snatches away the Babu and the picture is changed. The boy, the delight of the house, the cynosure of all, still in his teens, moves with his mother in rags to get hold of a generous relative for help. An

Insurance policy helps to maintain the mother and educate the boy. And yet the Insurance agents who are the links between the companies and the public are disliked and despised by the people.

The services rendered by insurance in building up our economic and social life are unique. A large sum of money received by the Insurance companies from the premiums may be invested in nation-building activities. The Government are now encouraging war-risk insurances. The employers of factories etc. insure the labourers against accident. With the economic advancement of a country insurance must grow, develop and thrive.

In a country like our motherland where teeming millions are ignorant, improvident, and where chronic poverty reigns supreme, insurance is a great blessing. It is a great weapon to fight for the economic welfare of our country. Insurance encourages saving, helps to educate the people, and fights with poverty, illness and accident. It is hard for a man to save—a man who somehow makes both ends meet, a man who has hungry children and sick wife to maintain. Yet there may be darker days. A man is to learn the habit of saving from a bee. When after years of toil and trouble fortune smiles on him he, unknown to thrifty habit, turns out extravagant. Insurance instils into us the virtues of saving for the dark days of life and thrift for the good of the family. In days of plenty we are "prodigal's favourite" and in days of scarcity we are "miser's pensioner". India therefore needs more insurance companies, honest and sincere firms, needs more field-workers who not only work for gain but for the welfare of mother India.

THE TRIUMPH OF SCIENCE

The history of human civilization is a record of the achievements of science. Wherever we may cast our eyes we notice the triumphs of science. From the pen I hold and the paper I write on to the droning of the plane overhead—everything proclaims the glories of science. One fine morning ignorant man woke up from his slumber and found, to his astonishment, that the world of Adam and Eve had been changed by science. Science has changed our outlook and our environment. Science has torn away the veil of Nature and peeped into her mysteries.

The victories of science on the physical world and the mental world are marvellous. We live, move and have our being in an age of science. There is no corner of a man's life where it has not its sway. Science has scanned the sky, measured the ocean, flown over the Himalayas and wrested from Nature all her hidden treasures. It has restored eyes to the blind, hearing to the deaf, legs to the lame, even life to the dead, so to say. It is through the efforts of science that a train runs, an aeroplane flies, and a wireless machine operates. It has brought comfort luxury and safety to the weeping man. It has found out the new ways of health. It has increased the joys of life by leaps and bounds. It has linked up the distant parts of the globe. Through the gift of science the famine-stricken people of China may receive help from Peru. Science has given food to the hungry, clothes to the naked, joy to the suffering and luxury to the rich.

Indeed when we think of the triumphs of science we gape in wonder. We deify science and defy formidable Nature and her mighty obstacles before which our fore-

fathers bowed reverentially. Science is the Aladdin's lamp which performs impossible feats overnight. Blessings of science are not confined to our body alone. Our mind enjoys them as well. Printing has cheapened knowledge and has brought to the door of a humble cottage treasures which would have been beyond the reach of the rich. Before the almighty science, therefore, we bow down our head in awe and reverence.

Science has enabled us not only to weigh and measure but even to analyse the stars. It has enabled us to descend to the recesses of the earth and the abyss of the ocean, to watch the rise of a mountain, the formation of valleys and to explain the direction of the rivers. It has enabled us to span great rivers. It has given us a guide over the trackless ocean. It has increased the speed of travel and annihilated distance so far as communication is concerned. It has given us light. It has relieved suffering and found remedies for pain. It has lengthened life and added immensely to the interest of existence. To it we owe our knowledge of bygone ages, to it we owe our idea of progress in the ages to come.

Be it also said that the triumphs of science are not only directed towards our welfare but to our misery as well. Science is responsible for millions and millions of overworked, underfed, half-taught men and women crowding themselves in flimsy houses breathing carbonized air, moving in a labyrinth of dull, sooty, unwholesome street with hard work and low wages in a world where the ground shakes and the air is full of the roar of infinite engines and machines.

Science is at the root of modern warfare. In modern warfare men are merely the tools to carry out scientific

inventions. Through the grace of science we have gas and gas-mask, tank in various shapes and anti-tank guns, U-boats, mine and mine-sweeper, bomber and super-fortresses, flying bombs and pilotless air-craft. Science is responsible for the horrors of war as well as the ways of safety from the war weapons of death.

The conquests of Alexander the Great, Napoleon Bonaparte are known to all. But their victories pale into insignificance before the victories of science by Newton, Faraday, Marconi and Edison. Science is the greatest of all the conquerors, past and present. Science has marched from victory to victory, from conquest to conquest, from triumph to triumph. Science has conquered superstition, —has trampled down prejudices, has fought ignorance and illness and won. Alexander's triumph stopped; Napoleon was defeated. Science knows no defeat, knows no retreat. So long man is man, so long man is curious, science must push forward conquering enemy after enemy. No Maginot line, no Hitler's line can stop its triumphant march. On the throne of our heart science has established itself firmly. There is none to dispute its right and challenge its authority. It is the monarch of all it surveys.



OPINIONS

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Inter. Poetry Selections, Inter. Prose Selections, A Digest of
Inter. English Texts, A Digest of B. A.
English Texts, Etc. Etc.

Writes :

I have read through Mr. K. Banerjee's "**PROBABLE ESSAYS**" and I recommend it strongly to those for whom it is intended as admirably suited for their purpose. The choice of subjects is excellent; the treatment of the themes is thoughtful and suggestive; the style is throughout simple and correct. Apart from its very high value as an examination manual, the book is full of information of particular interest to all who take a living interest in current affairs. I am sure it will prove greatly helpful to the student community of all classes.

Prof. J. S. Gideon, M. A., L. T., B. Com.

St. John's College, Agra.

Writes :

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